



**OCEANWIDE
EXPEDITIONS**

To the **Ross Sea** and beyond

Ushuaia - Antarctic Peninsula - Peter I Island - Ross Sea - Macquarie Island - Bluff

Triplog - January 16 - February 17, 2013

MV Ortelius



MV *Ortelius* was named after the Dutch cartographer Abraham Ortelius (1527-1598) who published the first modern world atlas, the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* (Theatre of the World) in 1570. MV *Ortelius* was built in 1989 in Gdynia, Poland, as a research vessel for the Russian Academy of Science and was named *Marina Svetaeva*. In 2011 she was purchased by **Oceanwide Expeditions**. The vessel was re-flagged and renamed *Ortelius*. Now the ship is sailing as a 125-Passenger vessel. MV *Ortelius* is 91 m long, 17,6 m wide and has a maximum draft of 5,80 m, with an ice strength rating of UL1/1A, top speed of 13 knots and one diesel engine generating 3200 kW.

With:

Nautical Crew:

Captain: Alexey Zakhvalashnyuk (Russia)

Chief Mate: Artur Iakovlev (Russia)

Second Mate: Sjoerd van der Berg (Netherlands)

Third Mate: Oleg Lyakh (Russia)

And Valeriy, Sergey, Sebastian, Gediminas, Edvinas, Pavlo, Ilya, Pedro, Gabriel, Andy, Noel, Yevgen, Mikhail, Oleksandr, Oleksandr (II), Oleksandr (III), Yuriy, Volodymyr

Helicopter Crew:

Chief Pilot: Sergio Morales (Chile)

Pilot: Felipe Henriquez (Chile)

Mechanics: Maximo Golle & Oscar Salazar (Chile)

Expedition Team:

Expedition Leader: Greg Mortimer (Australia)

Assistant Expedition Leader: Rolf Stange (Germany)

Guide/Lecturer: Ruedi Abbühl (Schweiz)

Guide/Lecturer: Elke Lindner (Germany)

Guide/Lecturer: Ben Maddison (Australia)

Guide/Lecturer: Christian Savigny (Argentina)

Guide: Julian Onyszczyk (Argentina)

Honorary man for everything: Rob Evers (Netherlands)

Ship's Physician: Ninette van der Es (The Netherlands)

Hotel Staff:

Hotel Manager: Johnny van Velzen (Netherlands)

Assistant Hotel Manager: Katrin Schlegel (Germany)

Head Chef: Christian Gossak (Austria)

Sous Chef: Khabir Moraes (India)

And Alfred, Ana, Charly, Danilo, Ferdinand, Ian, Joel, Lina, Marjorie, Marvin, Noelle, Orlando, Rodger, Rolando, Tootch

Wednesday, 16 January 2013: Ushuaia

16.00 (UTC -3): 54°48'7 S 68°17'7 W. Weather: Windy, but sunny and nice!

Some of us had already spent some days in Ushuaia, exploring the southernmost town in the world and its surroundings, and others arrived just in time to board *MV Ortelius*, which was alongside in the harbour, for a true Antarctic Odyssey! Nevertheless, even the longest journey begins with a small step, as they say. Our first steps up to the ship were on a narrow gangway, and once we had entered our new, floating home, we were greeted and checked into our cabins by Johnny, Katrin and their friendly staff.





Soon, our fearless expedition leader Greg Mortimer invited us to the bar to welcome us all on board. Johnny gave some information about everyday life on board, the guides said hello and then we manoeuvred out into the Beagle Channel. Our Antarctic adventure was about to start!

We went through the usual, compulsory procedures of safety briefing, lifeboat drill and the whole lot, hoping that we would never have to put this into use for real. There was not too much time to enjoy the lovely scenery, before we went down for a well-deserved dinner. In the later evening, just before it was about to get dark, our two Chilean helicopters appeared from the southern shores of the outer Beagle Channel and were stored away safely in the hangar. Many of us applied substances of various kinds to avoid the unpleasant effects of seasickness, and we certainly kept all our fingers crossed for a calm crossing of the much-feared Drake Passage. So went the first evening, and with good spirits and hopes we went to bed.

Rolf

Thursday, 17 January 2013: Drake Passage

08.00 (UTC -3): 56°34'S/66°07'W, about 55 nm (nautical miles) SE (southeast) of Cape Hoorn. Water depth 2500-3000 meters. Overcast, visibility slightly decreased. Wind force 5 (Beaufort scale) from W (west), 7°C air temperature, 7° water temperature. Air pressure 1003 hPa, slightly decreasing.

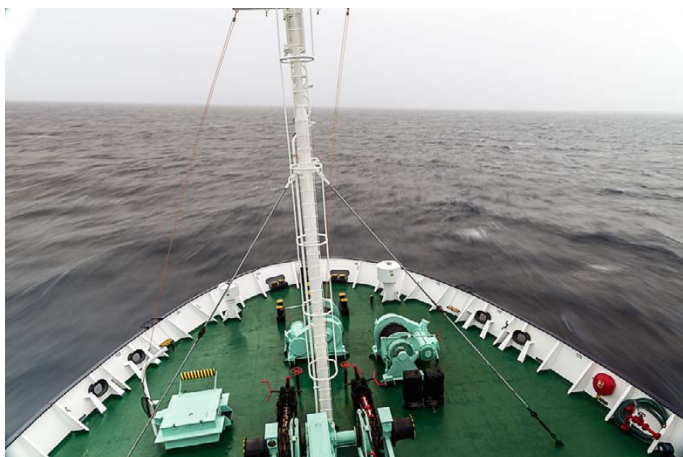
Our first full day at sea!

After being rocked and rolled to sleep, we awoke with a sense of gratitude for the seasickness tablets we'd taken the night before and that the swell in the Drake Strait was not the 10 metre high waves we'd been fearing. The colour of the water is amazing – slate grey, dark blue, waves with white caps. It changes constantly.

In our first lecture, Cristian introduced us to the sorts of birds we could hope to see on our trip. Oh, the excitement of seeing and identifying the wonderfully patterned, black and white wings of our first cape petrel. Then there was an albatross. Thanks, Colin for identifying a juvenile black browed albatross. Greg's lecture, Antarctica 101 really brought it home. Here we are after months of planning headed for the Antarctic at last.

Down to the lecture room again. We have now worked out that the lectures take place on Deck 3, Meals on Deck 4, bed on Deck 5, Bar, library and company on Deck 6 and the best views of all, from the Bridge, up the steepest stairs on the ship. What a good thing we have all these stairs to climb. We need the exercise after 3 course meals and frequent coffee breaks.

It was time for the issue of boots. I approached this with trepidation, as when we ordered them, I couldn't work out the correspondence in size between my Australasian sized feet and the European/US/British sizes, given on the order sheet. Every website I consulted, gave a different value. So it was with a feeling of great achievement to find ones



which fitted once I had put on three pairs of socks and added innersoles.

Our day concluded with Ruedi's film, taken on the west Falkland Islands, about the wonderful albatross which circles the globe at these latitudes, only ever going to land to breed.

Lorraine & Ashley

Friday, 18 January 2013 - Drake Passage, Dallmann Bay

08.00 (UTC -3): 60°11,7'S/55°12,7'W, about 130 nm NNW of Smith Island. Slightly foggy, drizzle. Wind 6 Bf from W, 1000 hPa, 3° air temperature, 1° water temperature.

Our second day at sea went on rather quietly, as the infamous Drake Passage did not live up to its bad reputation. We went to exciting events of various kinds, got our mandatory introduction to good behaviour in Penguin country, use of zodiacs etc. The birdwatchers were busy on the bridge, observing and photographing Light-Mantled Sooty Albatrosses, Cape Petrels, Southern Fulmars and more. Also Humpback whales were sighted a couple of times.

Those who stayed up longer could enjoy the first distant glimpses of the coasts of the Antarctic Peninsula and off-lying islands, namely Brabant and Anvers Islands, between which we entered Dallmann Bay to cruise then quietly into Gerlache Strait, which has the Antarctic mainland on its eastern shore. Magnificent scenery and more Humpback whales! Those who stayed up did certainly not regret it.

Saturday, 19 January 2013 - Antarctic Peninsula: Gerlache Strait, Lemaire Channel, Pleneau Island, Petermann Island

08.00 (UTC -3): 65°04,5'S/64°03'W, just outside of the Lemaire Channel, between the islands of Booth and Pleneau. Clouds at mountain top level (ca. 900 m), breeze from N, 991 hPa, air 1°C, water 0°C.

In the stillness of the very early morning, the *Ortelius* entered the Gerlache Strait, separating Anvers Island from the Antarctic Peninsula. Some keen voyagers were up at 3 a.m. to watch as the amazing, ghosted landscape slipped past. A humpback mother & calf were sighted close to the boat to the absolute delight of those few left standing on the Bridge!

At 5.30 a.m., a crackling on the loudspeaker system signalled the "official start" to the day. It didn't look auspicious – the heavy fog that had dogged our journey south was still about and we were fast approaching the Lemaire Channel ...

However, as the ship began to enter the narrow channel entrance and anxious photographers scanned the way ahead, the fog lifted, revealing the awesome, plunging cliffs, barely holding up the masses of crevasse-filled ice perched on their almost vertical faces. We progressed majestically through this so-called "Kodak Alley"! Blue icebergs glided past – small, large and massive. Photographs were taken!

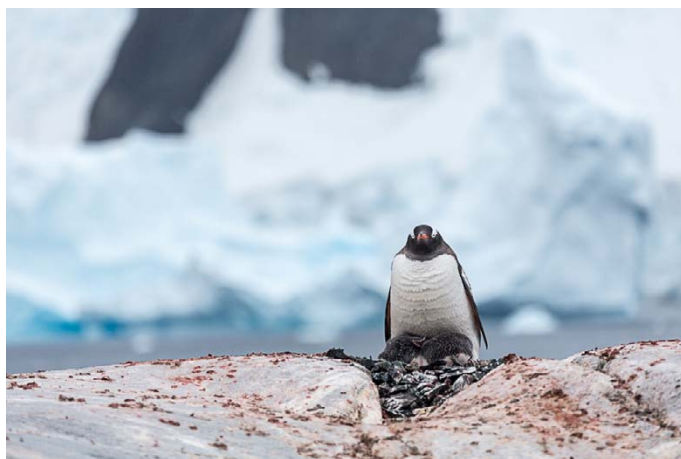
Even before the appointed 9 a.m. departure for Pleneau Island (Lat. 65° 06.3' S Long. 64° 02.5' W), eager passengers started to gather at the Deck 4 Reception area preparing for the very first landing of our voyage!! All were more than keen to 'turn their tags' and board any of the available zodiacs standing by.

A short trip across the water was accompanied by the first of what would turn into quite a few rain drops – on the driest continent on the planet!! We passed a small iceberg on which lolled a leopard seal (post-breakfast it seemed!), and then our first landing and 'swivel-exit' off the Zodiacs was upon us!

A flurry of welcoming Gentoo penguin porpoising, swimming, washing, 'braying' and rock-stealing greeted us. It quickly emerged that an elephant seal mother & calf were also soaking up the "atmosphere" and enjoying the 2° C summer morning on the rocks behind the "beach". Many photographs were taken!

After checking out the 'shags on a rock' breeding group and observing the Gentoos with their chicks, an "iceberg cruise" commenced via Zodiac. However, we were instantly distracted with the call of "Whales!". Powering towards the radioed direction of "11 o'clock from the ship", and slipping behind an iceberg, we spotted three humpbacks seemingly snoozing in the calm waters. Photographs were taken!

After quite a while watching the spectacle of their gently rising 'humps', plus the occasional leisurely 'blow', the rain





started to become a lot heavier and people's fingers and toes a lot icier. A quick cruise past two more leopard seals, also with 'smiles' on their faces as they lay at rest on small icebergs, saw us back on board the *Ortelius*.

Our lunch was served an hour early, to more than great satisfaction!

Eight kilometres south of Pleneau and down the Penola Strait lies Petermann Island (Lat. 65° 10.4 S Long. 64° 08' W). Here the French explorer Jean-Baptiste Charcot (1867-1936) sailing on the *Pourquoi-Pas?*, over-wintered while leading a scientific expedition, which also completed the charting of a massive slice of approximately 2,000 kilometres of the Antarctic Peninsula coastline.

Upon reaching the rocky shore of the island to begin our afternoon excursion, a hike was organised to a distant outcrop to search out a memorial erected to this crew. Warned about the potential for 'dive-bombing' skuas and ably led by our resident Historian, Ben, we took a dead-end trail to a too-steep rock face and had to retrace our (many!) steps and find an alternative route. However, a beautiful patterning of red algae and layered ice was visible in a large ice cliff in the middle distance. Photographs were taken!

Eventually after sloshing through an extensive, calf-high snow cover and fording 'rivers' of green algae, we reached what seemed to be our goal – a mysterious 'bucket' with a flat rock on top displaying the Command, "Do Not Touch" (in English AND French!) Many photographs were taken!

Back to the landing site and there was the opportunity to head in the opposite direction to visit some Adelies and their by-now large, black chicks. Close by, was a pair of blue-eyed shags (on a rock!) and their large chicks, occupying a beautifully constructed sea-weed and guano nest – a "room with a view" of the magnificent Antarctic Peninsula across the water.

With the Zodiacs revving their engines, there was one more opportunity to practice 'swivel-boarding' onto our craft – also a chance for those waiting their turn for transport back to *Ortelius* to marvel at the magnificent blues & aquas on show in the contorted, sculptural forms of the icebergs floating sublimely past.

Everyone re-boarded the mother-ship, turned their tags and voila! it was time for Happy Hour in the Bar. An enthusiastic debrief session ensued, before MORE FOOD at dinner.

The twilight night was coming to a close, when some of the voyagers who had retired to their cabins were startled by a strange 'rushing' sound, apparently coming from the exterior of the vessel. One look out of a porthole sent us racing for the Bridge. The *Ortelius* appeared to be completely surrounded by snow!

In actuality, the ship was in the middle of a huge field of sea ice and was trying to break through! The Captain had the ship's engines 'full steam ahead' - trying to force a passage beyond this barrier to some clear water visible ahead! The ship came to a halt. The Captain considered. He reversed the engines. The *Ortelius* moved backwards, leaving behind an 'imprint' of its bow in the ice field. The Captain's hand pushed the throttle fully forward for a second time and the ship powered into the sea ice. The ship pushed forward ... forward ... forward ... forward ... but, slowly coming to a halt once again. Being an ice-strengthened vessel, the *Ortelius* was able to ram through about half the distance it needed to cover.

The Captain considered, once again.

'All right everyone', he said. "It's time for bed! This looks like a good spot to spend the night!"

And so we did ...

Lile



Sunday, 20 January 2013 – Antarctic Peninsula: Antarctic Circle, Detaile Island

07:15 (UTC -3): 66°25,3'S/66°50,2'W, between Biscoe Archipelago and Antarctic Peninsula and 23 nm (nautical miles) north of Detaile Island (as the crow flies). Clouds at sea level, decreased visibility, almost calm, 985 hPa, air 2°C, water 0°C.

02:45 Awoke to the sound of soft pack ice bumping the sides of *Ortelius*.

06:45 “Good morning, good people”; the gentle alarm clock of Greg’s voice welcoming a new day of snow and sleet with news that, due to bleak conditions and poor visibility, today’s plans have been changed. Instead of landing at Prospect Point, our only possible site on the peninsular mainland, we had sailed past through the night and were now on course to Detaile Island. A wise decision. We would have been cold and wet for nought, as the only attraction on Prospect Point is views across the Peninsular - no penguins, no seals, no birds.

I have to admit to some relief not to be climbing back into wet weather gear immediately after breakfast.

07:00 Our usual convivial breakfast. This time with crispy bacon and croissants!

08:13 WE HAVE CROSSED THE ANTARCTIC CIRCLE amid snow and a guard of honour of magnificent bergs. Now, truly, we are in Antarctic waters. It was worth waiting over 50 years for this moment, celebrated with champagne and a speech from our illustrious leader; toasting the Circle, ourselves and James Cook, who did it first.

08:35 The first of the large tabular bergs drifted by. The colour of the sea and size and shape of the bergs has changed remarkably overnight. Less sculptured and more dense.

09:00 Horizontal snow across bow as ghostly bergs slipped by a couple of hundred metres away, just discernable through the mist; reminiscent of paintings by the first explorers which I now realise were not all that romanticised.

10:15 We arrived at Detaile Island, site of a meteorological hut built by the British Antarctic Survey (BAS) which was in service from 1956 to 1959. Today it is heritage listed and maintained by the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust and is a registered British Post Office. At present, three people are on a 5-week repair and preservation stint.

A pensive Greg waited for contact from the shore to determine whether landing was an option. It was very cold, windy, snowy with substantial swell from 25 knots of wind.

11:05 Eventually Greg received word that landing was good, so he took four staff to test the landing. A considerable swell made boarding the zodiac difficult. He radioed back to the ship and Ben announced that those experienced in zodiac travel were welcome to give it a go, and those who were up for the challenge. I wasn’t. I had watched the process of boarding and decided it was way out of my comfort zone so I watched proceedings from the bridge.

11:20 Greg and Julien returned to take the first six intrepid sailors on an extreme mail run (let neither sleet nor snow nor driving rain ...). As they left, Captain Alexey radioed Greg to go slow as wind had increased to 30 knots.

11:30 Second zodiac with Ben and Elke and another six passengers, followed by 3rd, 4th, 5th, each carrying six passengers, and the 6th left at 12:05 with five. Captain Alexey paced the wings, smoking constantly. So, out of 53 passengers, 35 took up the challenge. Forever thus, our ship will be divided into those who did, and those who didn’t.





Those of us left on board periodically braved the icy decks to photograph the departing brave. But we also got to see the most spectacular show of light playing on bergs and sea. Brilliant patches of sunlit ice amongst dark clouds and misty mountains. And way in the distance, multi-coloured coats climbing the snowy slopes of Detaille Island looking for all the world like penguins.

12:30 Our ship waits, engine throbbing like a heartbeat. I had a hot chocolate - don't tell those on the island.

12:50 Captain Alexey's pacing increased a notch as the zodiacs returned. By 13:20 all had boarded through the horizontal snow.

13:38 Set sail from Detaille Island, leaving the BAS hut on its snowy hillside to the three who care for it. We headed into dark sky and rain with Alexey delicately picking his way between islands and bergs. I watched, quietly from the side, the intense scene as he twitched between window, screens, receiving information through radio, quietly giving instructions. When he received the words 'secure' over the radio, he took a deep breath, removed his coat, and smiled.

14:00 All safely on board, now for lunch. The conversation was most animated, with those who 'did' telling those who 'didn't' all about it.

15:40 We pass north of Adelaide Island and into the Bellingshausen Sea, steering a course SW for Peter I Island, 550 miles away, for the next two days. There is a heavy swell. Back to the seasickness pills.

16:00 Christian gives a lecture on penguins. They seem that much more real now.

19:30 Dinner is now served in the dining room. Bon appetite.

20:45 Viewing of Shackleton's Odyssey in the lecture room.

Here endeth today's epistle.

Dale

Monday, 21 January 2013 – Bellingshausen Sea, en route to Peter I Island

08.00 (UTC -3): 67°13,7'S/74°28,8'W, 300 nm from Peter I Island. Northerly breeze, fog, spread growlers and bergy bits. 978 hPa, air -1°C, water 0°C.

We wake up as we please and have breakfast as usual. The granola people mix it (the granola) with yogurt or other sauce-like liquids of varying degrees of consistency and bizarreness (to someone accustomed to a Mediterranean diet). The protein people miss yesterday's scrambled eggs and help themselves to the somewhat less interesting -but gloriously free of anything added- hard boiled eggs with the inevitable wee sausages.

So in spite of very low visibility we managed to spot a number of birds.

- Grey Headed Albatross
- Light-Mantled Albatross
- Giant Petrel
- Cape Petrel

A circular, fisheye photograph showing a group of approximately ten people sitting in a circle inside a tent. They are all looking towards the center of the circle. The tent's interior is visible, with a yellowish light and a small flag hanging on the wall in the background. The people are dressed in outdoor gear, including jackets and hats. The image has a white border and a slightly grainy texture.

A photograph of a Brown Noddy in flight over a dark blue ocean. The bird is shown from a side profile, with its wings spread wide. The upperparts of its body are a mottled brown, while the underparts are white. The wings show a mix of brown and white feathers, with the primary feathers on the underside appearing lighter. The bird's head is brown with a white patch around the eye. The background is a deep blue, textured surface of the sea.

Tuesday, 22 January 2013 – Bellingshausen Sea, closing in on Peter I Island

08.00 (UTC -4): 68°21,8'S/85°58'W, 95 nm east of Peter I Island, cruising with 7-8 knots through open drift ice. Fog, light breeze from NW, air -2°C, water 0°C.

There was movement on the ship
The word was passed around
One Aussie had a big chunder – good on ya Dale (apologies to Patterson)
Thank Christ it was not me
Those bloody pills the doctor gave me are doing the trick

Strike a light !!! Strewth!!!
During the night we spotted lots of big bergs and some patch ice floats – with seals on them
The ship's crew are doing a bonza job – using the radar to dodge and weave those bloody bergs
We are certainly going well beyond the black stump!
The *Ortelius* seems to be built like a brick shit house – nice and sturdy and will have a decent crack at the ice
The captain seems to be a fair dinkum type of bloke who could get us off sticky wickets
Learning the Russian lingo – shutka(joke) and horosho (excellent)

Bob's your uncle – we are a weird mob on this ship
Plenty of Aussies who talk a strange version of English
The tucker is pretty ok – plenty of snags and eggs and cornies
No shrimps on the barbie however
Some funny comments from the drongoes from distant lands - but that's how the cookie crumbles
However everyone seems to be the full quid – thank Christ

Geez – those old sheilas certainly have impressed me – having a decent crack on those Zodiaks –
Certainly no signs of the Colly wobbles – go the Blues!!! Stone the Crows!
We could even sign up a few of them

The support blokes with their lectures have been giving it a good crack of the whip
Pretty down to earth and everyone is fired up
The 25 hour Antarctic days are throwing me out of whack and then we apparently end up losing a day -all seems a bit weird but I guess she'll be right in the long run

There are some blokes on board with some pretty serious photographic equipment – makes my little camera look like tits on a bull – however I am really stoked with my photos – no worries

There has been a major crisis this morning – the coffee machine has not fired up and Andrew has shown serious withdrawal symptoms. There has been a flurry of Russian engineers racking their brains about this one – they appear completely stumped and knackered – anyway it is all fun and games and she'll be right soon

Looking forward to the choppers and up there Cazaly!!
Hopefully we can shoot thru like a Bondi Tram and land on Peter I
There is a possibility we may be stranded and be up shit creek without a paddle
Greg will be taking emergency gear with us – you little ripper Greg

Victor



Wednesday, 23 January 2013 – Peter I Island, Bellingshausen Sea, en route to the Ross Sea

08.00 (UTC -4): 68°58'S/92°27,5'W. Wind force 6 (Beaufort) from NW, low clouds, reduced visibility, occasional drizzle, some loose drift ice. 991 hPa, air -1°C, water 0°C.

Well – thought, this would be a short log....hm, just a thought! Normally days on board do start with Greg's wake up call and most of the passengers do follow by having breakfast ... most ... but this day started differently:-)

It all began around midnight, yes, felt as it was still the same day, but formally it was not. A new day started but who would have expected it to be like this. The bridge seemed to be occupied, the place to be as we went through all the ice, passed by huge icebergs (some more than 1 Kilometer long....), all the lazy sea leopards on their water taxis and on top of it, believe it or not, the sun was shining (nearly) all the time. Even though we could not be sure really starting this day on this little volcano island, where approx not more than 600 people have been before.... We made it onto Peter I Island. WOW. Imagine, how many places in the world do exist, where this small number of people put their feet on before.

Suprise: no ice around the island itself – parking the ship straight in the ice, couple of miles away from the island, easier as anchoring and easier for the pilots as well. So people got excited when the first flight (!) during this trip with the helicopters has been confirmed. Six groups – five of ten and one of three - were supposed to go on shore. Sure, it takes time until everybody is ready, until the safety is given, until the first four people could go to the helicopters, until they decided who is with whom and get in and off.

A little humping, jumping and we were over the ice, straight on our way to set foot on the island which has already been prepared with safety equipment, flagged areas to let people know where to go – just on the northern area, on a glacier. Windy, some name it stormy, cold, face massage for free included – no shopping, no shoes, no bbq. Even better: change of perspective and by setting our feet on this place we “crashed” in here and there – real life, first things are not always successful, but with the help of the first ones....step into the foot steps of the previous person, as we sometimes are supposed to do..... :)

A battle: how long might it take to finish this adventure? Until four, six or even later....? Well, we have done it within roughly four hours. Puh, poor guys, on board, on shore – all taking care of us! (Thanks to all of you!)





Shit cold feet, on the way back, a short “sightseeing flight” around – amazing! Answers the question somebody had: “What are we going to do there?”

Back on board: happy landing, happy people – happy cheese.... - well done Johnny, even if we had no “Punsch”, you served good french or even dutch cheese, some biscuits, grapes and a good glas of red wine, nothing more is needed to end, or even to start this day! Later on, approx five o’clock, good time to call friends abroad :) and good time again to have a last or even first look from the bridge. Sea leopards playing around icebergs, nearly twelve or fourteen – enjoying life as well. Passing the ice and looking purely at sea without really any waves, just to make people fall asleep lightly.

So the start of this day was pretty unusual, ending with happy (warm) feet and even happy hearts, I guess. It was NEARLY followed by the same procedures of the days before: the well known wake up call, breakfast, no exercises, lots of sleep, lunch, more sleep, dinner, movie, bridge – as always ... :)

Birgit & Katrin

Thursday, 24 January 2013 – Amundsen Sea, en route to the Ross Sea

08.00 (UTC -5): 69°48’S/103°44’W, steaming with 10 kn westwards against a fresh northwesterly breeze. Overcast, visibility good, no sea ice, spread icebergs and bergy bits. 1001 hPa, air -2°C, water 0°C.

Another quiet day on the sea.

When I got up, the first thing I saw out of my cabin window was a Southern Giant Petrel and that was a very good start to the day!

We spent the day at full attention in the lecture room, listening to Rolf waxing lyrical on glaciers and ice-bergs. We then watched a movie about one of the biggest early 20th Century sailing freighter ships. It had sailed around Cape Horn in the 1920’s and survived a huge storm and all the while someone had been filming this amazing event!

Our resident historian, Ben, then took command of the lecture room. His presentation described the differences between the personalities of the Frenchman, Kerguelen and the Englishman, James Cook, as they completed their respective voyages.

The best part of the day was after lunch on deck – in the SUN! We were trying to shoot albatrosses and icebergs in many different ways. We are looking forward to many and varied pictures of this afternoon in our exciting Picture Contest!

The final part of the day was our Recap in the bar WITH DRINKS! Hopeful plans for tomorrow were discussed and Rudi played his magnificent documentary film on the amazing Rockhopper penguins.

Jennie

Friday, 25 January 2013 – Amundsen Sea, en route to the Ross Sea

08:00 (UTC -6): 70°00,5'S/117°10,7'W, 240 nm north of the Antarctic coast (Wright Island, on the Bakutis Coast). No wind ☺, gentle swell, low cloud cover, no sea ice, spread icebergs and bergy bits. 997 hPa, air 0°C, water 0°C.

08:15 Eagerly we are waiting for Greg's soft voice: Good morning good people... Breakfast is ready from 8.30 to 9.30am:-))

08:30 Once more we enjoy the rich and wonderful breakfast, while the always very friendly and attentive staff looks after our well being.

10:20 Greg announces, that we have changed our course, direction south, until we'll reach the edge of pack ice. Where we hopefully go on a zodiac tour.

10:30 Christian tells the story of Amundsen and the Fram-expedition. His BlaBlaBla (that's how he calls himself his lectures) was very interesting and attracted our attention very much.

12:40 The sun is coming out:-)))))) and we are waiting for another important announcement:

13:00 Click, click, click...it is lunch time in the dinning room, announces Johnny with his sexy voice! Immediately everybody is heading towards the feeding ground.

13:34 Pre-Info by Greg: the zodiacs will be ready at about 3 pm.

14:10 Greg on the loudspeaker: zodiacs will be ready at 14:45.

Everybody rushes in his/her cabin and got dressed, and dressed and dressed... , Woolen underwear, fleece, jacket, trousers, then goretex gear and on top cap, goggle and mittens. Camera around the neck. Ready, steady, go...

15:10 Zodiac tour: around fairy tailed iceberg's scenery, all kind of blue colour one can imagine , breathtaking scenery. A crabeater seal poses especially for us, so - that everybody got the chance to take his photograph. Surprisingly two Minke whales showed up for a brief hello and disappeared again into the Amundsen Sea. Our zodiac drivers had to make their way back, through floating pack ice, 17:30 to our home the MV *Ortelius*.



18:50 While having a drink at the bar. Click, click... dinner will be served at seven o'clock in the dinning room.

19:00 Same procedure as every evening.

20:15 HuhHuhHuh... Announcement of the movie "Dracula" in cinema 2, deck 3. Pop corn provided by Ben.

ENJOY and GOOD NIGHT.

Schloofet guet und traemet suess.



Saturday, 26 January 2013 – Amundsen Sea, en route to the Ross Sea

08.00 (UTC -6): 70°28,3'S/123°20,1'W, 170 nm north of the Antarctic coast (Siple Island). No wind, no swell, thin cloud cover, sun occasionally breaking through, light snowfall, no sea ice, spread icebergs. 984 hPa, air -1°C, water 0°C.

Today is Australia Day or as others choose to call it Invasion Day. For many Aussies, the day will be about getting together with family and friends around a barbecue and enjoying the sunshine.

Instead, today we find ourselves in the Amundsen sea with an overcast sky and snow on the deck of the boat. What a wonderful way to celebrate Australia Day.

The day started with the usual wake up call and breakfast on Deck 3. After a fortifying breakfast, it is off the bridge to search for the elusive whales or to attempt to identify the birds that are flying past. Thankfully we have experts in our passengers and staff to assist with this as I for one, have not progressed further than being able to distinguish between an albatross or a penguin.

A lecture from Ruedi about seals was on the agenda for the morning. His fantastic photography astounds and captivates many of us.

Lunch is buffet style which is always welcome.

In the afternoon we have a history lecture by Ben which is well attended. Who knew that people thought that there were giants in Antarctica?

Rolf is now sharing his knowledge about photography so hopefully those that are attending will be able to pick up some handy hints.

Dinner will be at the usual time of 7pm and then time for a movie or cards or observations from the bridge.

Not much has been seen today apart from some bird life and a Minke whale.

If I were to nominate somebody for Australia Day awards from this boat, I would choose the expedition team due to their expert knowledge on things "Antarctica" and for the enthusiasm with which they have passed this knowledge onto the lowly passengers.

"Happy Australia Day to all."

Katherine

Sunday, 27 January 2013 – Amundsen Sea, en route to the Ross Sea

08.00 (UTC -6): 71°49,5'S/140°17,5'W. Very little wind, no swell, thin cloud cover, no sea ice, spread icebergs. 977 hPa, air -3°C, water 0°C.

We are getting closer and closer to the Ross Sea....

Starting today's log at a couple of minutes into the day. The weather last night was so wonderful that we could not drag ourselves away from the bridge, the sun breaking through the clouds and illuminating the icebergs was mesmerizing.

Our position at 1 minute into the day was:

71° 28.262' South

136° 20.343' West

Speed 10.9Kn, Course 192.00, Outside air Temp -4.1.

Time to Ross Ice Shelf – 3 days, 18hours, 55min.

E.T.A. – 30-01-2013 at 18:56.

Finally the call to bed became too loud and we went to sleep

08.15 Wake up call. (Greg's gentle tones woke us from a deep sleep)

08.30 Breakfast is ready in the dining room.

Usual friendly start to the day, lots of chat and the usual wide range of subjects, talk of the day's programme, the quiz seems to be keenly anticipated as is the talk on Penguin Pooh, a strange breakfast table conversation topic!

10.30 Let's talk about sh...: Elke goes into detail about Penguin Pooh.

What a revelation, We learned so much about viscosity, volume, angles of ejection, distance achieved, Orifice diameter and shape, etc.etc. Who would have thought that such exciting and relevant research is happening in Antarctica!

The opening slide really summed it all up.

Pressure Produced when Penguins Pooh – Calculations on Avian Defaecation.

For the first time following a lecture a request was made to have this session on the CD of the voyage so that we can all enjoy it again on our return home.

Time for a coffee and chat before heading to the cinema for the film.

11.45 The *Ortelius* Cinema (#1, aka lecture room) opens for the second part of The Last Place on Earth.

13.00 Lunch is served in the dining room.

Another opportunity to catch up on gossip and to refuel after an arduous morning's activities!

15.00 The famous and Great Antarctic Quiz in the bar.

There was a serious enticement to participate in the quiz with the announcement that it would coincide with happy hour in the bar, so it was a very happy group of people who turned up ready to do battle at 15:00.

The quiz was masterfully handled by Elke, who managed to keep everybody in line and bemuse and confuse us with questions on History, *Ortelius*, Geography, Biology and Antarctic Terminology. Wide ranging questions about topics as diverse as the range of the large helicopter on board ship to the number of condoms ordered by McMurdo station. The biggest laugh of the day was a question which referred to manly blubber! A condition which is not helped by the constant amount of great food available on the ship.

The quiz was so enjoyable that we over ran our time and the next lecture by Rolf on geological time had to be put back from 16:00 to 17:30. It was a fun event which everyone seemed to enjoy, especially the winning team, we look forward to watching them claiming their prize a swim with Ninette in the ocean! Elke told us that we would have another quiz later in the voyage.

17.30 (Almost) everything about the weird thinking of geologists: time scales and more. Condensed into a geologically insignificant length of time. By Rolf.

Briefing and recap by Greg. We will discuss our observations, position, progress and plans for the near future

Greg gave us an update on our current position and the possibilities for tomorrow, we are gradually closing in on the ice and before long we will hopefully be heading for the Ross Sea. Possibly at some stage tomorrow we may see one of the helicopters in the air looking for routes into and through the ice.

Rolf then gave us an introduction into Geological time, a fascinating subject where it is difficult for our brains to comprehend the enormous range of time measured in billions of years, It was a very interesting session and left me looking forward to the next talk on the subject.

19.00 Dinner is served in the restaurant.

Greek Night in the restaurant, some lovely tender lamb!



While we were having dinner there was a bit of excitement as we started passing through area's of sea ice, straight after dinner everybody rushed off to the bridge only to find that we were back in open sea, completely flat, with not a ripple in sight. Lots of large icebergs, and sea ice on the horizon, tomorrow we are assured we will have ice!

20.30 Film As it is in Heaven in the lecture room. A beautiful, uplifting Swedish film....

Another wonderful clear night, calm sea with occasional sightings of whales, seals, penguins and birds. We finally dragged ourselves off to bed at about midnight.

A final thought about all the wonderful bird life on display here in the southern ocean, and a bit of poetry that I first read more years ago than I care to think about, but for some reason it has stuck in my mind.

A bird in flight,
It's wings spread wide.
Is the soul of man with its bonds untied!
Above the plough, the spade, the sod,
a bird flies in the face of God.
While I, with reason bright as day,
Must ever tread this earth-bound clay.
Spike Milligan.

Our position at 23:55 was:
720 56.038' South
1480 56.553' West
Speed 11.3Kn, Course 273.60, Outside air Temp -5.7.



Terry

Monday, 28 January 2013 – Along the ice edge of the Ross Sea

08.00 (UTC -6): 72°35,6'S/152°25,8'W 240 nm from nearest coast (Newman Island, Nickerson Ice Shelf). Very little wind, no swell, overcast, very open sea ice, spread icebergs. 972 hPa, air -3°C, water 0°C.

Good Morning good people:

...another day at sea.

After having received a great introduction to ..how to become a navigator ... and a introduction into the life of Penguins ... and as nobody want's to write today ... the only thing I have to add is: Johnny lost in Yazee today :-))))

... and of course ... if somebody asked himself ... what is the orange vessel doing here: the answer was: ... we are a research vessel ... so we are doing research ...

Sleep well good people!...another night at sea:-)))



Tuesday, 29 January 2013 – Approaching the Ross Sea

08.00 (UTC -7): 71°16,7'S/161°39,9'W. Very little wind, overcast, sun trying to break through. Open sea ice, spread icebergs. 997 hPa, air -5°C, water 0°C.

Woken at 02:00 by the ship crashing through ice. Helicopter flown at 04:45 for an hour or so on a reconnaissance over the ice. A good number of Emperor Penguins, whales and seals seen in the early hours by those up on the bridge.

At 71°18' S 161°20' W and disappointingly heading SE amongst iceflows and icebergs when Greg called wake-up at 08:15. Light covering of snow on the deck. Beautiful scene with low thin sunshine breaking through the clouds.

After breakfast spent some time on the bridge. Passed through a snow storm which severely reduced visibility. Saw a solitary Emperor Penguin standing on an iceflow and, soon after, two Humpback Whales and what looked like an Orca fin near them. Also saw a Southern Giant Petrel, Antarctic Petrels, Snow Petrels and Mottled Petrels.

Good short lecture by Ben on James Ross' exploration in Antarctica. At 11:00 we were treated to hot chocolate with rum and cream on the foredeck. It snowed for a while during this festivity, to complete the Antarctic setting. This was followed by the third part of "The Last Place on Earth".

Still heading north at lunchtime. Greg explained the ice situation but promised that we would reach the Ross Ice Shelf by nightfall on 1st February. Back to the bridge after lunch, course now a tad south of west. One Crabeater Seal seen.

Informative lecture by Rolf on the 'light triangle' in photography. Just as this lecture was concluding an announcement came over "Two Fin Whales on the starboard bow!" so everyone in the lecture rushed up to the bridge but the whales had disappeared by then. The TV programme "The Worst Journey in the World" was shown next. While this film was showing the helicopter went out again for another reconnaissance, the results of which seemed positive.

After the film we stayed on the bridge until dinner. A number of Crabeater seals and Minkie Whales were seen as well as one Snow Petrel.

After dinner back to the bridge for more ice and wildlife spotting. Saw more Crabeater Seals, a flock of Antarctic Terns and a Southern Giant Petrel.

Track recorded on the bridge GPS screen today shows erratic meandering around the sea to avoid the pack ice.

Clive



Wednesday, 30 January 2013 – Getting closer to the Ross Sea

08.00 (UTC -7): 69°48,5'S/166°58,7'W. No wind, overcast. 5/10 sea ice, spread icebergs. 980 hPa, air -3°C, water 0°C.

Contrary to the rhyme -thirty days hath September, April, June and November, January also had thirty days this year! The last day of January "dawned" with sunny weather, white shining ice and blue skies. Had someone used the latest washing powder to get out the grey?

Great news!! Helicopter rides! Up, up and away we went, spirits rising as we soared. How small the ship looks from a distance. More excitement as we landed on a floe.

After lunch we went back to our usual positions on the bridge or on the bow, exchanging opinions on how to navigate the ice.

Another great day of our journey.

Jackie



Friday, 01 February 2013 – Into the ice of the Ross Sea

08.00 (UTC -8): 69°55,8'S/174°21,8'W. No wind, mostly clear sky ☺. 4-5/10 sea ice, spread icebergs. 985 hPa, air -3°C, water 1°C.

We awoke to a glorious morning with a sunrise to die for - all red, blue, orange and white. The sea was like a mirror so the reflections were amazing. The sea ice was still thick with its lovely greeny/blue petticoats showing below the edges of the ice floes. Some early Orcas were spotted before Breakfast although they were very far off and travelling fast.

Sadly during the night the ice had become so dense that we had to head north in order to find another channel down through the ice towards the 180 degree Longitude line where the Ross Sea ice normally breaks out first. However the increased ice around the ship meant many more of the lovely Snow Petrels taking advantage of our lovely updraught. They are like little white fairies.



About 10.00 am the Captain was able to turn the ship south again to try and get across to the 180 degree line towards the south. I had a great chat with Greg who said he had been studying the Ross Sea to NZ map this morning and had noticed for the first time that down along the 180 degree line there are several Seamounts and other shallow points all of which no doubt probably contribute to the early break out of ice in the Ross Sea along this line each year.

The helicopter again was dispatched to look at the ice conditions. We were still proceeding South West. We were surrounded by masses of ice and for quite

a while today the Captain again took the wheel. We zig-zagged through the pieces of ice, sometimes even nudging them aside or breaking them apart where they are thin enough. The lovely crunching sounds are SO evocative of breaking ice in an icebreaker. Sometimes when the pieces of ice are larger and very blue you can hear the thousands of year old air being released from its icy grave.

Ben did a talk about Dumont Deville much of it in French!!! Julian was practising his



Diablo on the back deck in preparation for the BBQ we are being promised. Many of the ice flows had penguin foot-prints on them – as well as poo!

In the afternoon Elke did a great talk about Invasive Species and the difference between those and introduced species, e.g. Penguins to Norway. At the end of the talk Johnny invited us to a Mulled Wine and Samba music party on the deck behind the Bridge. The girls and Yves danced their socks off in the sun – the atmosphere was wonderful.

The ice thickened up again after the party so that we restarted zigzagging around the thicker bits of ice. There we had more close Adelie Penguins and Crabeater Seals on iceflows. There was some beautiful bits of blue ice.

After dinner we had another recap and Greg told us that he had spoken with Rodney Russ the owner of Spirit of Enderby who was just leaving the Ross Sea at the end of their first voyage of the season. He told Greg that it had taken them 3 days to get into the Ross Sea through the ice and 2 days to get out and that he had never seen so much ice in this area in the 18 years he had been coming down here. Therefore we were still hopefully on time as per the new itinerary.

The film The March of the Penguins was the film of the night. Meanwhile some of the Expedition Team reviewed photos for the end of trip film show competition in the bar while we sailed through water that was largely free of ice. Thank Goodness we can get a bit of speed up.

At about 20.00 it started to snow with HUGE flakes, which were sticking so I was tempted out onto the bow to build a snowman. It had to be small because the snow was so soft. I gave it a big smile and called it Captain of the Bow. When Katrin heard about the snowman she went to the kitchen to get two raddish and a carrot. We went out to decorate him again and he fell apart so I rebuilt him and he turned into a Penguin!!!!!!

Helena



Saturday, 02 February 2013 – Through the ice of the Ross Sea

08.00 (UTC -9): 70°34,6'S/179°34,7'E. No wind, overcast. Moving with 7 kn through first year sea ice, no icebergs! 985 hPa, air -3°C, water 0°C.

Word of the day has been contributed by Elke – “Minkish Behaviour”. A whale appeared and I mistook the dorsal fin as belonging to an Orca. Elke said it could not be an Orca it had Minkish Behaviour.!

We awoke to find we had been travelling South and West during the night and have now arrived in the 180 latitude line area. We have also finally got into one year ice flows, which do not have pronounced petticoats and the top of the flow seams sit directly onto the sea. During the night there was quite a lot of grinding and shushing of ice along the outside wall of my cabin so I decided to do a study of the sounds, sizes, behaviours of ice against the hull just behind the Lecture Theatre on level 3.

I noticed that Year 1 ice has virtually no petticoat beneath it. When it hits the hull it makes a shushshhing sound, it does not make the ship shudder nor does it need to be moved out of the way like the bigger ice, instead it cracks and collapses in on itself. Year 2 and a bit more ice makes the ship hesitate but the sound along the hull is a gentle grind or crunch. Deeper sea ice (2 foot or more showing above the water) really makes the ship shudder as the contact is made and the grinding sound on the hull is VERY loud and carries on as the hull moves along the bit of ice. The ship needs to weave between these last flows and only catch one point or corner. It also appears that the Captain likes to ensure that if he does make contact with these deeper flows that there is



clear water behind so the flow has somewhere to move into and away from the ship.

As there were no big icebergs around it was decided not to do a helicopter ride this morning and instead Ben did part 1 of his lecture on Mawson. Mawson's photographer was Frank Hurley and the photos look as fresh as they were when they were taken.

The ice came and went around the ship but after lunch it suddenly became MUCH thicker and we were advised that there were probably only about 2 miles to go before there was open water. Many of us went onto the Bow and watched the last exciting push of the ship through the thicker ice. We were surrounded by Snow Petrels a few of which were sitting on the ice so we could get very good looks at them. They are perfectly designed for flight with their legs set very far back on the body so landing is a very clumsy affair. When on the ice they have great difficulty walking and normally appear to use their wings to lighten the load on their legs.

We broke free at about 15.20. Soon the sea opened up altogether and we were able to speed up. The relief was palpable and the Captain, his officers and crew were all beaming. I went to shake his hand and thank him, his officers (who all seemed to be on the bridge) and the sailor on duty for all their efforts at getting us safely through! I teased the Captain that now he could sleep, he admitted he would!

There was a real party atmosphere on the Bridge and Happy Hour started at 17.30 !!!!! At 18.30 there was a recap at which Reudi showed all the new helicopter flying footage. Greg told us that we will be heading straight to the coast so that we can enjoy the continent as we head down to Cape Crozier.

Helena

Quote for the day – Sign at the door of the Norwegian station on Jan Mayen (north Atlantic)

“ Theory is if you understand everything but nothing works.

Practice is when everything works and nobody understands why

On this station theory and practice are combined in such a way that nothing works and nobody understands why”.

Contribution from Victor.

Sunday, 03 February 2013 – Ross Sea: Daniell Peninsula, Coulman Island

08.00 (UTC -10): 73°08,6'S/170°02,1'E, 10 nm north of Coulman Island. Light breeze, partly overcast. Clear water, some icefields ahead. 986 hPa, air -1°C, water 0°C.

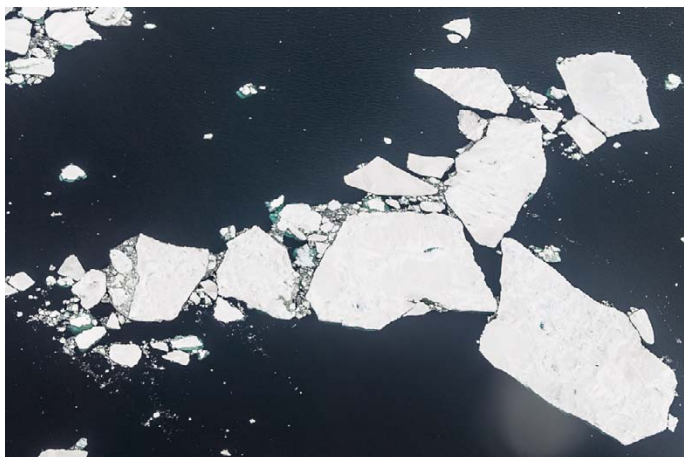
This day somehow seems to have escaped from the attention of the body of main authors, so it will briefly be summarized by the editor. We were more than delighted to see land, and it was not just any land, but it was our promised land, the place of our dreams, the destination we had been longing for: the coast Antarctica, bordering the Ross Sea! We had reached the steep, glaciated cliff coast of Victoria Land just north of Coulman Island.

Greg quickly concluded that the best way to get good views was to be a helicopter flight. Soon we got ourselves organized into the groups – slightly modified to give us more space in the helicopter – and off we went. Needless to say that it was just mindblowing to soar at breakneck speed over the ice-floes, passing inhospitable Coulman Island and then flying along the ice cliffs of the mainland coast! Up and down the glaciers we went, having a look at the higher mountain realms and then flying over the lower ice fields which resembled (or actually were, if floating) a small ice shelf. Everybody came back from the helo deck with a wide smile on their face!

In the afternoon, we came together so Greg could give us an outline of our plans for the upcoming days in the Ross Sea. We had obviously lost some time in the ice, but he made it clear that every effort would be taken to get as much out of it as we could! Now we just had to keep our fingers crossed for the weather ...

Rolf





Monday, 04 February 2013 – Ross Sea: Franklin Island, Beaufort Island, McMurdo Sound.

Ross Island: Cape Evans, Cape Royds.

08.00 (UTC -11): 76°58,4'S/166°12,5'E, NW of Beaufort Island. Overcast, calm. 983 hPa, air -4°C, water 0°C.

We cruised towards Ross Island, in awe of the ice laden mountains and glaciers passing us by under grey skies with low cloud level – the scenery is stunning regardless of weather

We eventually anchored after lunch at Cape Evans and looked shorewards at Scott's Hut, quite large, close to the water line and being brown was quite distinctive against the black and white background – the black being the volcanic rocks and sand have being ejected from the towering volcanoes that are the basis of Ross Island

The weather and conditions appeared and proved challenging for the Zodiac trips to the Hut. The outside temp being -12 with a 30 knot wind lowering the real temp close to -25

The Zodiac boats and drivers were literally covered with ice making entry from the ship's gangway very slippery together with fairly rough waves. Once underway the occupants were immediately covered with spray and water which then turned to ice – thats fun!

Many thanks – drivers and staff to get us on and off safely in quite treacherous conditions

The landing on shore was relatively easy and we easily slipped up the sandy volcanic beach. However the strong wind whipped up the snow and really tested our gear with multiple layers of clothing. I certainly appreciated my 2 balaclavas





and snow goggles leaving very little skin exposed. Even taking the gloves off to take a photo was a hand chilling affair

While waiting to gain entry to the hut most of us embarked upon lengthy walks for an hour or two and that really gave us a realistic appreciation of the difficult conditions that could be encountered – and this was summer time!!

We were all in awe of Scott's Hut which has been restored to original conditions both externally and internally showing how life really was. For me this was a profound experience – just seeing all their equipment, supplies, clothing, medical and laboratory supplies and photographic dark room. A snap shot back in time 100 years. An enormous amount of stuff for 2 years was needed. The stables adjacent to the hut where Scott's ponies sheltered over winter was amazing – just imagine bringing down their food for this period of time. Far smarter bringing dogs (like Amundsen) that can be fed on the plentiful supplies of seals.

Just a personal note to thank Greg for his wonderful leadership, vast knowledge and patience on this trip to ensure that we are having the maximum opportunities to experience this environment. On the shore excursions his smiling face is always the first to welcome and inform us of the opportunities that await . Thanks Greg – great job mate!!!



Tuesday, 05 February 2013 – McMurdo Sound: Cape Royds, Taylor Valley (Dry Valleys)

08.00 (UTC -11): 77°33,5'S/166°11'E, anchoring south of Cape Royds. Overcast, southerly breeze. 984 hPa, air -7°C, water 0°C.

What a great day! We woke to the calm seas of McMurdo Sound and a view from the porthole of its black and white cliffs and a bright sky. Our intrepid guides, back from last night's adventure on the ice at Cape Royds, were up early and into the zodiac to investigate whether a landing was possible. Conditions were favourable and after an early breakfast we boarded the zodiacs, which still had icy floors, but our drivers were not as ice-encrusted as yesterday. There, on the shore was an Adelie Penguin, watching as we scrambled out into the water and onto the ice. A line of flags guided us safely over the cracking ice, past a mummified seal and a couple of sleeping seals and onto the black volcanic ash of Cape Royds. A 300m walk up the black hill brought us to a view of two penguin rookeries and the pale wooden hut nestled below. As we queued, waiting for Rolfe to brush the soles of our boots, five little penguins walked down the hill toward us, looked and abruptly changed direction, up and over the hill, where we noticed two southern skuas, with very pale heads on the top of the hill. A nest! Take care! Remember Greg's instruction to lift one arm if they attack. The larger penguin colony seemed to be particularly noisy and there was Ruedi videoing the little penguin trying to get back over the ice. It took some slow tentative rocky steps with arms outstretched and then it seemed to need a rest. – a bit like me actually.





The moment I'd been waiting for had arrived as I stepped into Shackleton's Nimrod Expedition Hut. How wonderfully restored! It felt like such a homely place, walls lined with golden boards and a wooden framed photo of two people in profile. Were they King George V and Queen Mary or perhaps George IV and Queen Alexandra? There were tins of preserved cabbage and we remembered the stories we'd heard from childhood about Captain Cook using pickled cabbage to prevent scurvy. Dozens of bottles of salt led us to reflect on how they preserved food and animal skins. We saw boots under the bunks, socks hanging on a line strung across the room and curtains around a bunk. A large cast iron fuel stove, with the firebox between two ovens, was standing away from the wall in the food preparation area. Its metal chimney would have allowed maximum heat transfer into the room. Hanging under what looked like the pantry shelves were three hams and above them, on the top shelf, right in the corner, two straw covered bottles of Mackinlay's whisky. Outside we saw boxes, labeled British Antarctic Expedition 1907, some with SHACKLETON stencilled on them, stacked against the walls. What treasures are in them, we wondered?

After climbing back up the black hill, we discovered that the zodiac had been moved to the other end of the ice. The ice was breaking up and Julio and Greg had tethered the piece we were to board from to the ice still attached to the shore. It was a strange sensation on that floating ice. It felt quite stable under our feet, but the piece next to it was bucking up and down in the waves.

We were back on the *Ortelius* by noon. From the bridge we noticed the Orion steaming south. Two Minke whales surfaced close on the port side of the ship just as Johnny invited us for lunch in the dining room.

The *Ortelius* was manoeuvred close to the sea ice for us to take an ice walk. Unfortunately the ice started cracking and all were recalled, but not before some of the staff encountered two curious Emperor Penguins which were fascinated by Ruedi's video camera.

In the afternoon, the sky to the west was clearing, revealing the sparkling Transantarctic Mountains. We were all looking forward to visiting the dry valleys and were greatly relieved when the helicopter maintenance crew managed to resolve the problems with starting the small helicopter. There was no need for our lifejackets as we travelled all the way over ice, up between the mountains and around into the Taylor Valley, one of the three dry valleys in the Ross Sea area. The brown coloured mountains, and ground here were flecked with intricate patterns of snow, reminding us of snake-skin. Elke indicated the area we were permitted to explore, a square with sides of about 500 metres, which included a steep hill, and a small lake at the edge of a huge glacier. Climbing the hill, which was composed of the jagged rocks of a moraine, from a glacier long since receded was a challenge, but the view from the top was worth it. From Rolf's lecture





we were able to identify U-shaped valleys and rounded hills which must have been formed by glacial erosion as well as jagged peaks which had never been covered. The glacier did not look like any others we had seen. Its end was rounded and had icicles hanging like stalactites over a large cave. There were no icebergs to be seen, just a beautiful reflection in the glassy surface of the frozen lake at its foot. This glacier does not move. Elke told us that the major source of ice loss is sublimation in the very dry, cold air.

There was an amazing variety of rocks in the moraine; granite, white and pink with crystals of all different sizes; a dark rock, maybe basalt, some pieces of which had wide white streaks across them, and then there were the pieces of dolerite; black with sharp edges and smooth polished surfaces which looked very like prehistoric tools. The sun came out, the sky was blue. Magic!

Sergio on our return helicopter trip had yet another delight to show us. In the along the ice edge was a pod of Minke whales and then an even larger one of Orcas, porpoising along in the brilliant blue sea. To top everything off, just as we were going to bed, the sea began to freeze and we had our first glimpse of the much talked about pancake ice and then retired with the midnight sun streaming in through our cabin windows. What a top day!

Ashley & Lorraine

Wednesday, 06 February 2013 – McMurdo Sound, McMurdo Base/Hut Point/Observation Hill.

08.00 (UTC -11): 77°43'S/166°16,2'E, at anchor in McMurdo Sound. Light breeze, sky partly clear, Mt Erebus partly visible, pancake ice on water. 982 hPa, air -10°C, water 0°C.



After last night's glorious visit to the Dry Valleys it was hard to catch sleep. The moonlike surface structure of Taylor Valley coupled to sunbathed mountaintops emerging through the lifting clouds created impressions of unworldly beauty. When after Greg's last exhortations at 00.30 hrs to watch the ice forming its pancake structures around the ship, we finally nodded off, we missed the long hoped for Mount Erebus' emergence from the mists at around 3.30 a.m. Fortunately, La Artiola aka Lydia, - always present when there is a photographic opportunity - , captured Erebus at dawn in its full glory. A little later when we turned up at the bridge, the first layers of cloud drifted in and shrouded Erebus in a magic veil.

The cold morning was spent on the bridge enjoying the views of the Antarctic Mountains across the Sound and watching a pack of Orca's hunting penguins along the edge of the ice floes. Our dedicated staff, always active in devising new ways to keep the pax busy, staged an icewalking event around the ship, but it had to be cancelled before it was even begun due to instability of the icefloor. Nevertheless, the repatriation of the staff, already out on the ice and fully engaged in penguin filming, provided an interesting spectacle from the safety of *Ortelius*.

After lunch, we all set out for McMurdo. A smooth helicopter operation landed us at the research station, where we met



with friendly local staff who guided us some of us straight to 'the shop' to acquire from its limited stock memorabilia for those at home. First aesthetic impressions of McMurdo Station with its pipes and portacabinlike structures were mixed, and in our opinion there was a general feeling that the station is an eyesore in a white immaculate vastness. This does not detract from the undoubtedly splendid work done by these researchers. All went to see Scott's Discovery Hut, which it is fair to say came – not quite unexpected – as something of a disappointment compared to the very atmospheric huts of Scott and Shackleton at Cape Evans and Cape Royds. The next optional event at McMurdo was the ascent of Observation Mountain (900ft). Challenging for some of us and



including some scrambling, it was accomplished without serious casualties and the summit provided extensive views of McMurdo Sound and the limitless Antarctic Plateau where you could imagine the great explorers camping out. We ourselves reached the table some 50 metres under the top and then returned to ground level. On our walk back to the helicopters we got a lift from a very friendly American researcher who enlightened us about the highaltitude balloon research conducted from the nearby Ross Ice Shelf.

From 6 pm. we were transferred back to the ship. Preparing ourselves for dinner we realized that we would move out later that evening away from this unique and amazing place on earth to start our return voyage.. It was nearly impossible to tear ourselves away from the vistas across the ice where the Antarctic Mountains were bathed in a golden glow. Our visit to the Ross Sea sacred places and in a way our voyage to Antarctica proper was at an end! We feel privileged to have been here; thanks to the perseverance of Greg Mortimer and his team no intended visit was cancelled, and we take home images of unprecedented beauty.

Age

Thursday, 07 February 2013 – Ross Ice Shelf, Ross Sea

08.00 (UTC -11): 77°24,9'S/172°01,8'E, near the Ross Ice Shelf. Stiff breeze from E, overcast. 978 hPa, air -14°C, water 0°C.

On our way again, leaving the Ross sea and going for Mcquarie Island. It is going to be a long ride, again, but first we will admire the Ross Ice Shelf. ETA early early morning. The first wake up call was already at 05.30. Lots of people were out, but sorry, I turned around and stayed with my pillow.



That's one of the wake up calls we receive as well. Normally, we are never woken by a nice voice telling what time it is or getting invited by a very friendly voice for breakfast. No, it is alarm clocks which will beep us out of bed. It is a nice and quite at that time on the ship. Meeting the regular early birds or passengers who have been spending all night on the bridge and dive into their beds after breakfast, not to be seen anymore till lunch time.

0830 Breakfast, almost everyone made it. Of course they checked out the Ross Ice shelf. We said goodbye and left for the entrance of the Ross Sea. This will take us a couple of hours, approx. 36 before we will meet the ice again. According to the satellite photo's it will not be that bad that we will lose sailing time.

Hardly any passengers around after breakfast, maybe they are tired of all the early wake up calls, late landings and still full of excitement of all the huts and landing sites they discovered, or we have nice comfortable beds?

1300 Lunch. There they are again. Hamburger Buffet. Even the passengers who normally eat a banana or just a soup, they all were there for our McDonalds junkfood buffet, loved by everyone. But as quickly as they came they disappeared as well. We all laughed a little bit, because for us it means a little bit more of free time. Yes we do sleep. We are not around for 24 hours, as some of you think, but we take naps in between. The best times are when you are all out on a landing, we have our ship back, being nice and quite upon return of the first passengers with all the excitement showing on their faces, sharing the stories and pictures. But to be honest, we love to have you all on board.

In the afternoon today we had the Documentary "Encounters of the world" The English and the German version. Nice place as well the lecture room to take a little snooze.

1900 Dinner time

Everybody in and afterwards the movie Pulp Fiction! The rating about the movie started already at the dining table. It was one of those, you like it or you do not like it at all.

Overall it was a nice sunny and calm seaday.

At home I will call this day a pyjama day. In and out of bed, nice interesting talks with my pillow, rain on the window and bit to eat whenever I feel like it.

We done already 22 days, 10 more days to go.

It's been a wonderful time so far.....are you all coming back next year?

I heard the return trip to Ushuaia is quite interesting.

Johnny

Friday, 08 February 2013 – Ross Sea

08.00 (UTC -11): 73°08'S/178°36'E, 180 nm southeast of Cape Adare. Light breeze from N, partly overcast, sunny spots. 975 hPa, air -3°C, water 0°C.

An uneventful day at sea, so no surprise that there is no text entry for today from our group of main authors. All the editor wants to mention here that we came amazingly quickly out of the ice of the northern Ross Sea, which had cost us so much time on the way down. Thank God it went quicker this time!

The certain highlight of the day was the fundraising action, held in the afternoon for the benefit of the New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust, which takes care of the historical huts in the Ross Sea. Our historian Ben excelled as auction master and with his glorious efforts, a substantial amount was raised with various items of interest such as books, pictures and even a much sought-after bottle of Whisky, a copy of the one quite recently found under Shackleton's hut at



Cape Royds. The auction master's two lovely assistants certainly made a significant contribution to the stimulation of a healthy bidding atmosphere.

For further events of the day, the interested reader is herewith kindly asked to refer to the lecture list at the end of this triplog.

Saturday, 09 February 2013 – Out of the Ross Sea, Scott Island

08.00 (UTC -11): 69°11,9'S/176°53,5'E. Stiff breeze from NE, low clouds, reduced visibility. 974 hPa, air -2°C, water 0°C.

'Twas the ninth of the month,
With a foggy grey dawn.
We left the Ross Sea,
And sailed North in the morn.



A lecture from Rolf next -
To go was a must.
Gondwana and oceans,
And moveable crust.



The staff were quite naughty,
They slept through Ben's lectures,
On Mawson's bad luck,
And his icy adventures.



The seas then got rough,
As we sailed further on.
We rolled and we pitched,
And I had a lie-down.



Christian talked about penguins,
And other such things.
Like feathers and beaks,
And flightless wings.



In the evening we came past,
The Island of Scott;
A desolate rock,
In a desolate spot.



That night, we were shocked,
When the sky turned to black.
We knew not where the sun went,
Or if it'd come back.



(With apologies* from Penny).

*Needless! ☺ Ed.

Sunday, 10 February 2013 – Southern Ocean

08.00 (UTC -11): 65°39'S/176°23'E. 852 nm from Mcquarie Island. Strong breeze from NE, overcast, poor visibility. 972 hPa, air -1°C, water 0°C.

SOMEWHERE in the Southern Ocean, steering through the Screaming Sixties!!

“... an apple a day” (and varied attempts at trying to keep it down ...)

Surprisingly, the morning dawned grey and misty. It was yet another perfect day for a somnolent and sleepy post-break-fast session in the Bar searching for a favourite book- that someone else had secreted in their cabin - or just staying in one's cabin and experiencing the somnolence and sleepiness first hand ...



However, emerging out of the bands of passing fogginess, came a whisper. We were in for “challenging” weather ahead!

With this cryptic comment wending its way through the corridors, we followed suit and headed down to the Lecture room for one of our resident “histologists” riveting talks – “Sealers and Exploration”, or “How to Skin and De-Blubber An Elephant Seal in 3 Quick Manoeuvres AND in Under 60 Seconds”.

Suitably informed and energised, we flocked to lunch. Unfortunately, even though our appetites had been more than whetted by the lecture, no boiled penguin was on the menu ...

After our meal, we once again made our increasingly cautious way, increasingly clutching at strangely shifting hand rails, down increasingly jerking corridors to the lecture room for the “Premiere talk” by our resident Doctor. “Scurvy” was the subject – pictures were included!

As the ship’s gentle rocking grew in amplitude, frequency and direction and more and more white-capped waves lapped larger and larger until they started smashing against the hull, we were encased for a final time in the womb-like confines of the lecture room - “Photography Part IV – How to Get Nice Photos of Old Huts” kept us entertained with detailed examinations of ISO values, HDR techniques and sharing of software details.

A short Recap was held in the Bar detailing our departure from the Ross Sea and a video screened (in the Australian dialect), with promises of the highlights of Macquarie Island to come (plus a detailed description of “How to Destock an Entire Island of Invasive Rabbits, Rats and Mice in a Mere Matter of a Few Years And At the More Than Reasonable Cost of a Mere Few Million Dollars Per Rodent”).

Dinner was served! We flew, almost air-borne, down the stair-ways and corridors to reach the dining room, pretty certain now that the morning’s whisper of “challenging” weather conditions had arrived!

SOUTHERN OCEAN GALE!! And we were in the middle of it ...

“Beaufort Scale 10 / Knots 48-55 / Kms 89-102 / Description Storm Whole Gale

Very high waves with overhanging crests. Large patches of foam form wave crests give the sea a white appearance. Considerable tumbling of waves with heavy impact. Large amounts of airborne spray reduce visibility”

The air temperature hovering at -0.6 degrees C; ship’s adorning icicles finally dissolved; all exterior doors closed, a convivial evening was spent on the Bridge, attempting to remain upright, while clutching at railings with one hand, a camera waved about with the other, all the while playing “Let’s Try to Shoot the Monster Bow Wave As It Crashes Head First Into the Bridge Windows”.

MANY photographs were taken ...

With the Autopilot occasionally turning itself off, as yet another wall of water washed over the bow, and the valiant Bridge crew running to the wheel to regain control, the whipping wind tore the gray, yellow and now ‘pinkening’ clouds asunder to reveal a glorious blue sky and THE SUN dipping towards the horizon. It’s golden light played teasingly on the green-grey, frothing and boiling water-y cauldron, through which we so languidly voyaged – a joy to behold!!

These washing-machine-wave conditions followed us into the night and we were lulled into total wakefulness throughout the wee, small hours by the pounding, whoomping, crashing, whacking, banging, and sloshing of the sea waves against the port holes.

The night and the ship rolled on ...

Lile

Monday, 11 February 2013 – Southern Ocean

08.00 (UTC -11): 62°33,5’S/170°13,7’E. 600 nm from Mcquarie Island. Strong breeze from NW, overcast. 979 hPa, air -0,5°C, water 0°C.

Our lovely ship the *Ortelius* has been pitching and tossing all through the night in an amazing Southern Ocean swell arising from a Force 10 gale, and winds of 50+ knots last night. At 2.20 am a resounding crack had Chris leaping out



of his bunk thinking that one of our cabin doors might have broken off its hinges. Thankfully, it was just the lid of the toilet crashing down!

Towards morning the sea moderated slightly, so that there was the usual good turn-out for breakfast at 8.30. We were surprised when we went along to breakfast to find a large photograph of Chris's 1969 British Antarctic Survey Group at Halley Bay displayed in reception, with an insert of him on Midwinter's Day in 1966, aged 23 years, as well as a

recent photograph taken on this voyage under the heading: "Happy Fourth Antarctic Birthday, Chris! 70 Years Young Today". Our breakfast table colleagues burst spontaneously into Happy Birthday to You! as we sat down to eat.

After breakfast, during which there were many birthday congratulations from our fellow travelers, expedition staff and crew, Chris opened his birthday cards, one of which was a beautiful hand-drawn picture of a Wandering Albatross, from grand-daughter Artemisia.

The sea is still heaving and pounding, although the wind has now dropped to Force 8. The day is grey, with waves still spectacularly breaking over the bow, but most people on this voyage are seasoned sailors, and the atmosphere is very gay after so many special and memorable adventures in such an awe-inspiring space. We have now spent four consecutive

days at sea although a stimulating lecture programme, together with time spent scanning the ocean and horizon from the bridge, spotting and identifying wildlife, ensures that our days are still interesting and action packed. At 10.30 Elke gave an interesting presentation on King Penguins, and we are anticipating seeing many of them when we finally arrive on Macquarie Island. The usual buffet lunch was cancelled due to the bad weather and we enjoyed table service instead. After lunch the sky began to brighten and we enjoyed some fine sunny periods throughout the afternoon, although the sea remained high and confused. Later in the afternoon Ben gave us a review of the introduction of wireless technology by Douglas Mawson on his 1911 Antarctic expedition, and some of the unforeseen problems it had led to, especially for the poor radio operators!

It was not possible to go out on deck due to the pitching and tossing of the ship through very rough seas. Nevertheless, it was still very rewarding and exciting to be on the Bridge watching the waves crashing over the bows and spotting the few Albatosses and Petrels that were around. At 6.00pm we all assembled in the bar for a glass of champagne to celebrate

Chris's 70th birthday – and his fourth in the Antarctic – with a very amusing toast proposed by Greg using a few notes on Chris's earlier life that he had somehow managed to acquire along the way. Greg also presented Chris with a long overdue Polar Medal cunningly disguised as a biscuit! This was followed by a fine cake with what seemed like a miniature

Roman Candle burning brightly in its centre, which provoked another rousing chorus of "Happy Birthday, Chris!" The sun was still shining brightly as we all went in to dinner, but the initial possibility of a first sight of the Aurora Australis was lost shortly afterwards when the clouds rolled in once again. Despite Ben's best efforts, the all-time favourite Halley Bay film of 1966, Breakfast at Tiffany's with the wonderful Audrey Hepburn, proved impossible to find, and so Call of the Wild was shown instead, although with the sea beginning to rise once again most people decided on a last quick drink in the bar, before disappearing for an early night in the comfort of their bunks!

Chris & Linda

Tuesday, 12 February 2013 – Southern Ocean, heading for Macquarie Island

08.00 (UTC -11): 60°03'S/166°27,4'E. 400 nm from Mcquarie Island. Partly sunny, strong breeze (Beaufort 6-7) from W. 980 hPa, air 2°C, water 0°C.



We are still travelling mostly northwards, lots of wind and rough seas. I noticed, especially during the second half of the night, that the ship's movement increased to the extent that my paper bin took off across the floor with a mind of its own, constantly travelling from my bed to the window. Unearthly noises came from the decks below, as objects moved around – a poltergeist on the prow!

In the morning, we found salt on the bridge windows, and the waves broke over the windows in the bar. Must have been huge seas. The sun came out before lunch and it was nice to sit on the upper deck for a while in the sun, but there was still lots of wind. After lunch, the seas calmed down a little and the sea turned a beautiful indigo. A black-browed albatross

flew around the ship. The ocean was so wonderful – in all directions, just blue. We may well be the only ship in this part of the Southern Ocean.

Today we had the Southern Ocean Writers Festival with several participants; some with warm and real personal stories.

Jennie

Wednesday, 13 February 2013 – Southern Ocean, heading for Macquarie Island

08.00 (UTC -11): 56°55'S/162°05'E. 162 nm from Macquarie Island. Partly sunny. Westerly gale (Beaufort 8-9). 981 hPa, air 1°C, water 1°C.

Around one o'clock, a call from Greg: "Aurora Australis on the upper deck, faint but visible". Although I've seen Aurora before, it was exciting to see it again and it was all around in the sky with, at some part, the moving curtains which are typical. I also saw the Southern Cross for the first time in my life! Again, lots of movement in the ship through the night; it felt like she really had to do a lot of work with the crew, while we slept.

Greg told us his amazing and exciting story about his expedition to the Ross Sea area in a small yacht with friends to ascend Mount Minto.

Wind force increased to 9 or more on the Beaufort Scale and sea rating increased to 7. Sometimes I get tired of having to calculate my movements around in the ship; to climb the stairs or rise from my bed to get something on the other side of my cabin takes forward planning. Many people are seasick or using medication, but I feel fine without medication (which I am giving to other people) and I sleep quite well, like a baby rocked in her cradle.

During the night, we reached the Macquarie Island area and came under her protection from wind and waves. Immediately, the movement of the ship calmed down, which woke me up. I saw a strange sight through my cabin window: two lights - one from the Spirit of Enderby (with which we are to rendezvous to transfer two passengers for medical reasons) and the other from the Australian base on the island.

Just a few hours away from the island, I am full of anticipation.

Jennie

Thursday, 14 February 2013 – Macquarie Island

06.00 (UTC -11): 54°30,4'S/158°56,7'E, at anchor on the eastern side of The Isthmus (Macquarie Island Station). Gusty winds up to 20-30 kn coming over the island. 995 hPa, air 3°C, water 1°C.

Celebration of Saint Valentine – this time quite differently.... ☺ No chance to get any roses, special gifts or so ever, therefore the special gift for us: celebrating our last landing – at Macquarie Island.





Happy to have reached Macquarie Island after loooooong days in really rough seas.

At around midnight, we reached the Island we all looked forward to – wildlife, landscape and hopefully enough time to walk around, to discover and explore. And indeed, we had that. It started in the early morning around half past six and an early breakfast, before we went out to our first zodiac tour at “The Isthmus”, watching king penguins in the water giving us the first welcome committee, as well as seals on rocks and of course: birds....white ones, brown ones, albatrosses and many more ... ☺

People from the station gave us a warm welcome and guided us throughout the whole day, showing and explaining us their Island, offering scones and clotted cream, tea and coffee... – comparing it with McMurdo.... ☺

Perhaps not all of us had seen those huge elephant seals before, fighting for their space at the beach, laying near to each other in the grass, moulting, sleeping, scratching, making funny noises.

Yes, some Gentoos and Kings where around as well, and for birdies.....

Half past twelve we came back, having a quick lunch around one o'clock while the captain took the ship and the rangers to the next landing area at Sandy Bay. And still great weather conditions – sunny!



Valentine at its best: even if there was nobody ministering to Christians, who were persecuted under the Roman Empire (part of the legend of St. Valentine), we received an almost warm welcome of curious king penguins. They came up to us so near and some of them already picked our legs : ☺ .

At the beach, southern elephant seals layed around, rockhoppers passed our way and nearly everybody got excited about those animals. Some of us even layed down to experience the king penguins – or maybe the other way round ? : ☺
Lovely sun was still with us! No rain, just some wind – great conditions! Taking the steps up to the colony of rockhoppers, lucky us, we could use the stairs – up to heaven, it seems. “Climbed” up, thousands of rockhoppers, chicks and their typical noise welcomed us.

Expected to go back to the ship at around six, we had to go back a bit earlier as just from one to the other second it became stormy and snowy. Well, even if this was no longer Antarctica, it was the same fast change of weather conditions in the Southern Ocean. But just one hour later – again, the sun came out! What a day....)

Nobody really expected that we are facing another zodiac cruise... ☺ – and what about dinner???? ☺ Well, both had been a lovely surprise!



To Lusitania Bay the zodiacs went to – cruising around this unbelievable huge colony of royal and king penguins. The rocks and even the beach was fully packed with them. And the passengers who didn't take part, they watched the king penguins playing around the ship and observed the start of a great BBQ outside, behind the bar.

In fact, sausages, meat, fish, potatoes, spare ribs, salads, garlic bread and lovely white and red wine, beer and for sure – music gave us the nearly last highlight of this day.

No regrets about no roses or even valentine gifts, this evening started to become one of the most happy ones! Later on, a small “colony” of survivors started the last part of the day in the bar.... – no more comments about that ☺

End of the day and finally end of this log and.....nearly finished this amazing trip :(

Jackie & Birgit

Friday, 15 February 2013 – Southern Ocean, heading for New Zealand

08.00 (UTC -11): 51°16,7'S/160°35,5'E, 440 nm to waypoint near Stewart Island. Low clouds, occasional rain. 1003 hPa, air 5°C, water 7°C (!).

Macquarie Island is an Australian protectorate more akin to the wondrous ice continent to the south than it's much closer geographic neighbours, the New Zealand sub Antarctic. It's a mini Serengeti in the Southern Ocean and has World Heritage status but surprisingly not for its diversity of wildlife. It gained its world heritage status being unique amongst all sub Antarctic Islands as an up-folding of deep oceanic crust, meaning that every rock on the island was once at the bottom of the ocean. It is the jewel in the crown and rivals South Georgia for biological density and diversity. It lies amongst the the albatross latitudes the furious fifties, and surprisingly, slightly north of Ushuaia. Now that means cold, wet, windy and wonderful.

So why are we here; well the rugged beauty for starters and of course the beasties; seabirds and seals dominate this realm. As we have repeatedly seen, creatures here are exquisitely adapted to the wild southern ocean and several species are endemic, meaning they occur no where else such as Macquarie Island's Royal Penguin. The themes of supreme adaption, diversity and endemism constantly repeat themselves. Macquarie Island only gets about 650 hours of direct sunlight per year so it's not just tough for the beasties consider the plants and all things botanical they also need to maximise their opportunities. So if you are able to perform the the amazing trick of photosynthesis your days here can be trying. This is life on the edge.

Macquarie Island and its neighbours are home to half the world's sea birds 40% of the world's albatross and 50% of the world's penguin species.

Until the 18th century this area's wildlife was oblivious to the fact that humans existed. Sadly, in a very short period of time we, meaning nineteenth and twentieth century Sealers and Whalers did their best to decimate the animal population of the island and what they didn't kill the ferrel pests they introduced did. Miraculously, it has been snatched from the brink and this treasure is being restored to its original state, free of pests and ferrel animals. The work is ongoing but it is a great success story and in such restored wilderness resides hope for the rest of our planet.

Under our hand Whales, Elephant Seals, Fur Seals and all species of penguins were the quarry; and for what, tossed into a pot, euphemistically known as digesters, and boiled down to make candles and soap. The thought of these grisly oil cookers bubbling away gives me the shivers. We boiled these creatures down from the largest of whales to the smallest of penguins. We all saw the try pots on Macquarie Island and they remain a rusting reminder of our ignorance to the environmental carnage we unleashed. It is important to note that most of these animals were harvested before we discovered fossil fuels and their oil was used as to light the streets and warm the houses of Victorian Europe and the Americas. Sadly, we are slow learners and future generations will, no doubt, reflect on our current lack of imagination with regard to energy sources with similar disgust. Even more so as we had a choice.

With resolve, passion and a lot of hard work Macquarie Island is rapidly approaching its pre anthropocene glory. The cats, rats and the rabbits have gone and the wind and weather are claiming back their heritage. Humans have been appalling environmental stewards but at Macquarie Island we saw a great success story and the image at Lusitania Bay of a million King Penguins surrounding the derelict digesters is a powerful one. It amazes me to contrast all that we have achieved and built as a species to what we have destroyed. As far as we currently know, we are it, there is no one else. No one else to preserve our world, however, with what I've just seen at Macquarie Island I know it can be done.

We didn't inherit this world from our grandparents we have it on loan from our grandchildren.

Graham & Noelle

Saturday, 16 February 2013 – Campbell Rise: entering the continental shelf sea south of New Zealand

08.00 (UTC -11): 49°43,4'S/165°25,0'E, 170 nm southwest of next waypoint near Stewart Island. Low clouds, wind force 7 Beaufort from WSW. 1009 hPa, air 9°C, water 7°C.

.... It is always sad when a journey comes to an end...

With the speed of an old granny's bicycle (22km/hr) we moved from continent to continent to continent.. More than 6000 nautical miles !

Today we are working towards disembarkation: boots and life jackets we needed to return, we make a group picture, the bar bills had to be paid. The trip log is being created, all the e-mail addresses collected, pictures shared amongst us all. Luckily we had a smooth day at sea to arrange all these things..

In the morning there was a last presentation from Rolf about Spitsbergen. Some of us had already been there, but others would certainly now consider a trip to the other cold end of the globe ... In the afternoon we had a photo competition: Wow!!! How nice to see all those lovely pictures. You do not need a special camera to take wonderful pictures; you just need to be at the right moment at the right place...! In the evening we had a pleasant farewell drink in the bar.

Reflecting on the journey we had, I think we had a wonderful voyage.

Luckily for me (as the doctor) we all were healthy when we arrived in Invercargill.

Maybe we meet again someday on another trip,

I wish everybody all the best, and I want to thank all of you for making this trip as wonderful as it was,

p.s. Don't forget the emergency toilet visit before landing ;-)

Grtz, Ninette van Es

Sunday, 17 February 2013 – Bluff New Zealand

08.00 (UTC -11): further north than yesterday. Weather: hopefully good and certainly warmer than in the Ross Sea.

Sunday, 17 February, is at the time of writing still mostly guesswork, although it should be predictable. After a last, sweet "good morning, good people!", there will be a last, sweet *Ortelius*-style breakfast. And then, our great Antarctic Odyssey will be history. Great memories, lasting impressions, an unforgettable experience.

Some of us will have some more time in New Zealand, others will return home straightaway and some are even lucky enough to return with MV *Ortelius* to Ushuaia, getting back to Macquarie Island, the Ross Sea, Peter I Island and the Antarctic Peninsula ... whatever your plans are: thank you for sharing these 32 with us on MV *Ortelius*! May your on-wards journey be safe, and hope your luggage arrives at your destination together with you ;-)

Total distance sailed on this voyage (Ushuaia - Bluff): 6,898 nautical miles or 12,774.9 kilometres.

Text: most of us (name of author is under the text of each day).

Wildlife list: Christian Savigny.

Layout, maps and photos: Rolf Stange.

It has been a pleasure to travel with you.

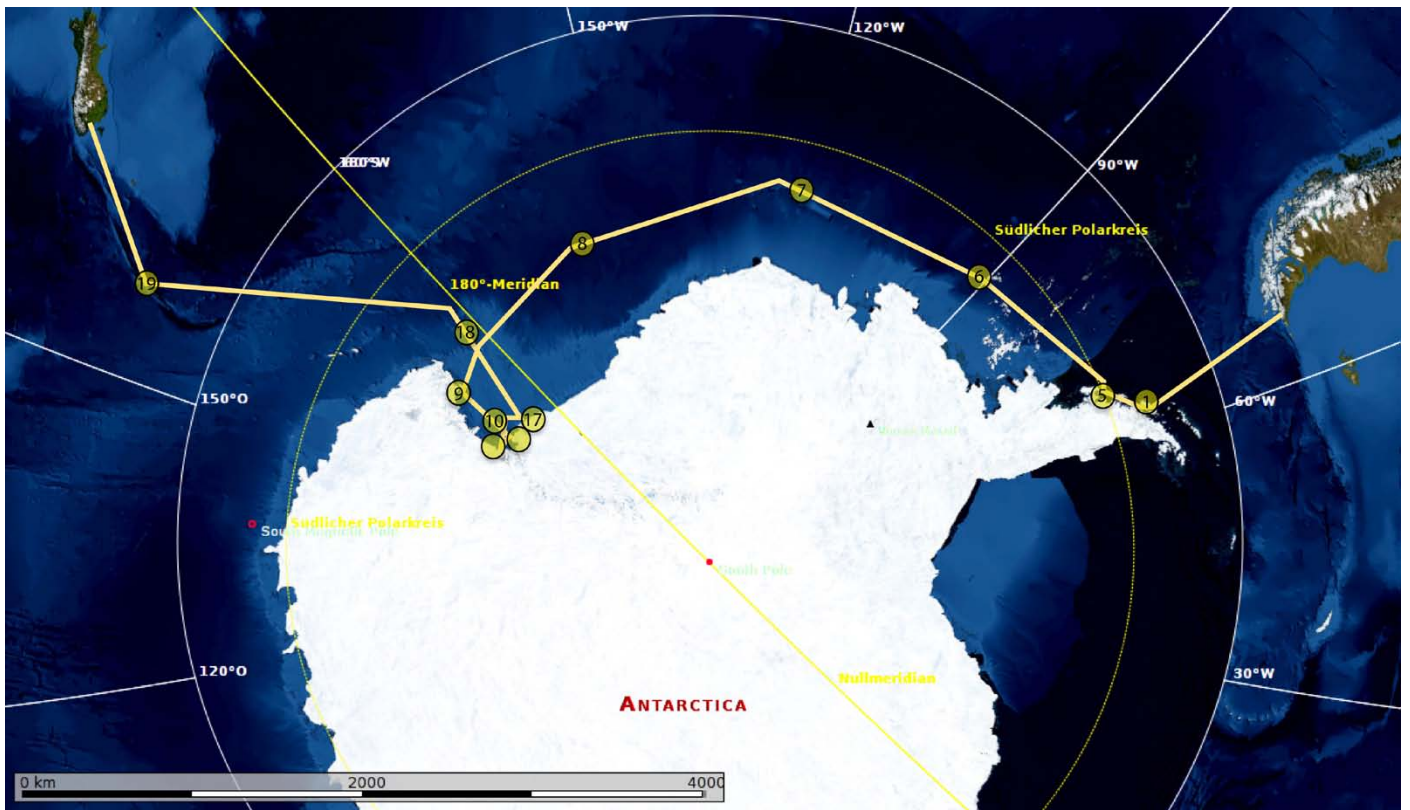
On behalf of Oceanwide Expeditions, Captain Alexey Zakhvalashnyuk, Expedition Leader Greg Mortimer and all the crew and staff, we thank you for visiting the Antarctic Peninsula, Peter I Island, the Ross Sea and Macquarie Island with us and hope to see you again, anywhere between the poles!

For more information on polar voyages, please visit www.oceanwide-expeditions.com.

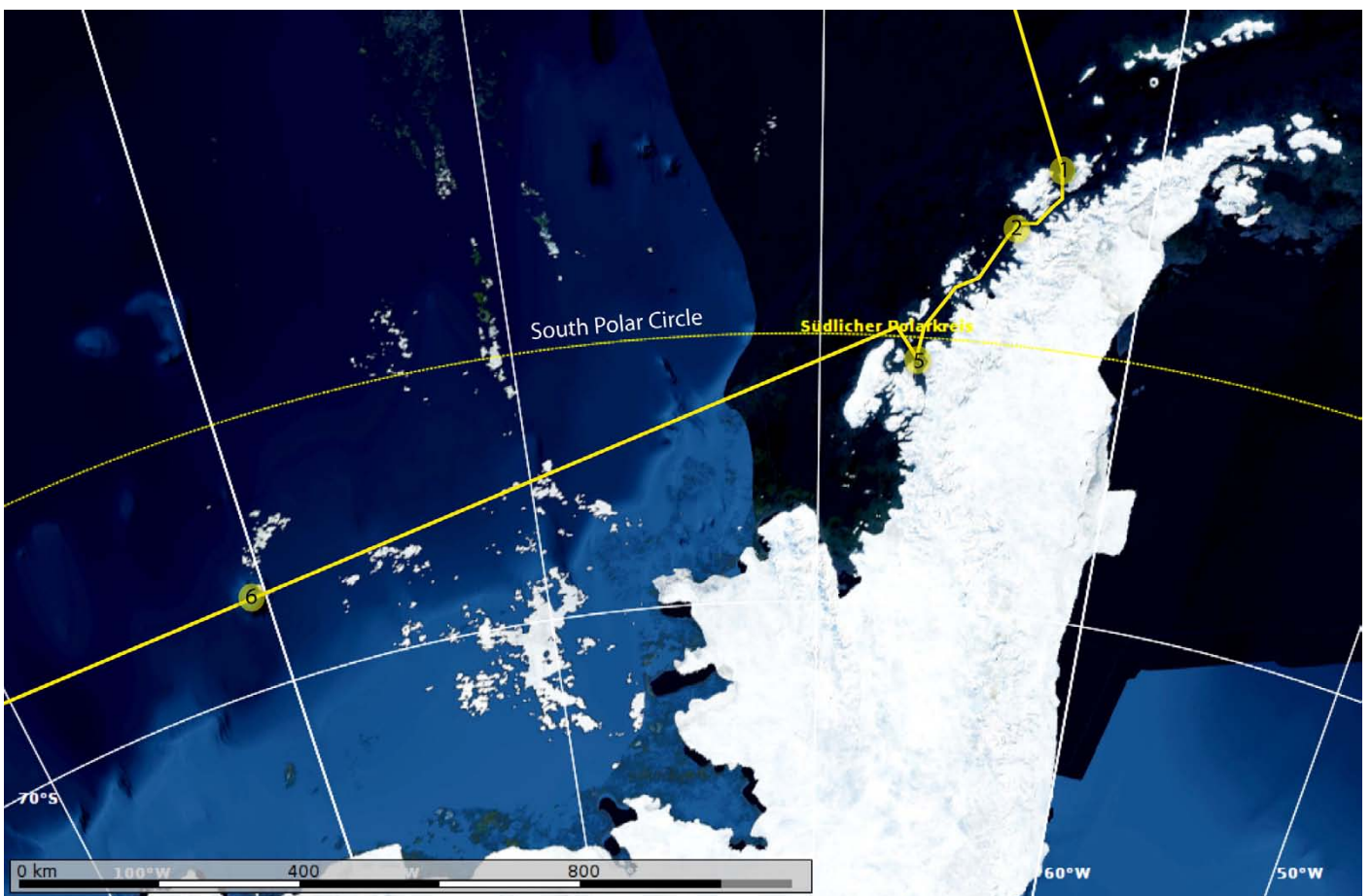


Map Index:

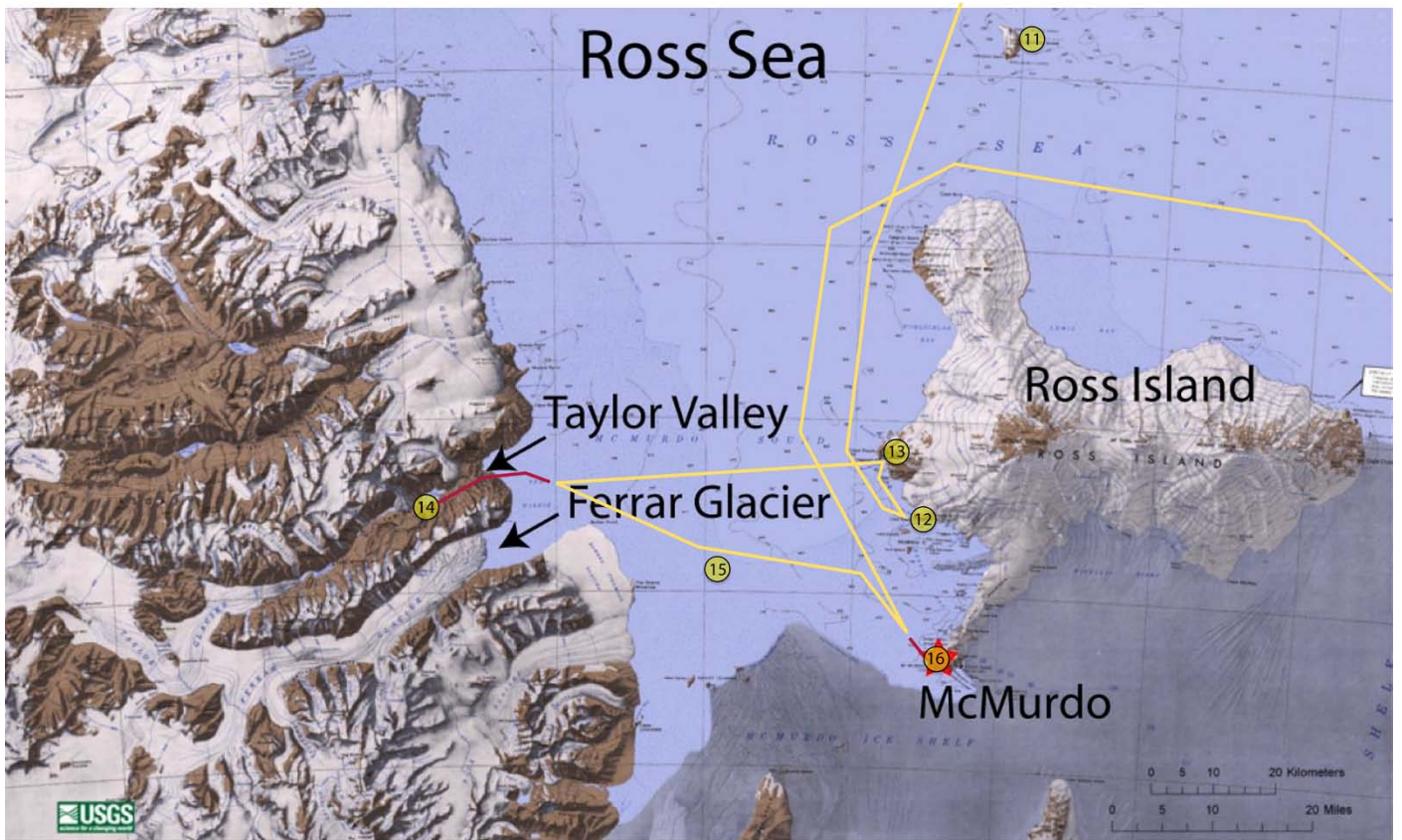
1. Dallmann Bay (late night cruise)	12. Cape Evans (zodiac landing)
2. Lemaire Channel (early morning ship cruise)	13. Cape Royds (zodiac landing)
3. Pleneau Island (zodiac landing)	14. Dry Valleys: Taylor Valley (helicopter landing)
4. Petermann Island (zodiac landing)	15. McMurdo Sound fast ice edge (aborted walk on ice)
5. Detaille Island (zodiac landing)	16. McMurdo Base/Hut Point/Observation Hill (helicopter landing)
6. Peter I Island (first helicopter landing)	17. Ross Ice Shelf (ship cruise)
7. Amundsen Sea (zodiac cruise)	18. Scott Island (passage)
8. Northern Ross Sea (helicopter flights)	19. Macquarie Island: The Isthmus (Station)
9. Ross Sea coast near Coulman Island and Cape Phillips (helicopter flights)	20. Macquarie Island: Sandy Bay (Landing)
10. Franklin Island (early early morning passage)	21. Macquarie Island: Lusiania Bay (Zodiac cruise)
11. Beaufort Island (early morning passage)	



Overview

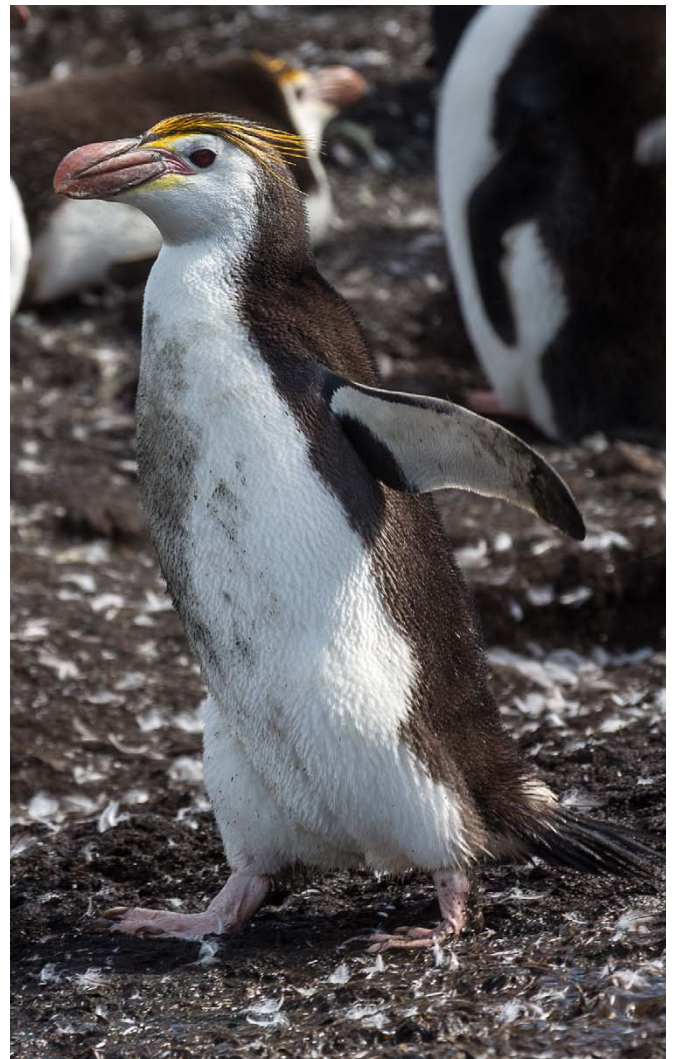
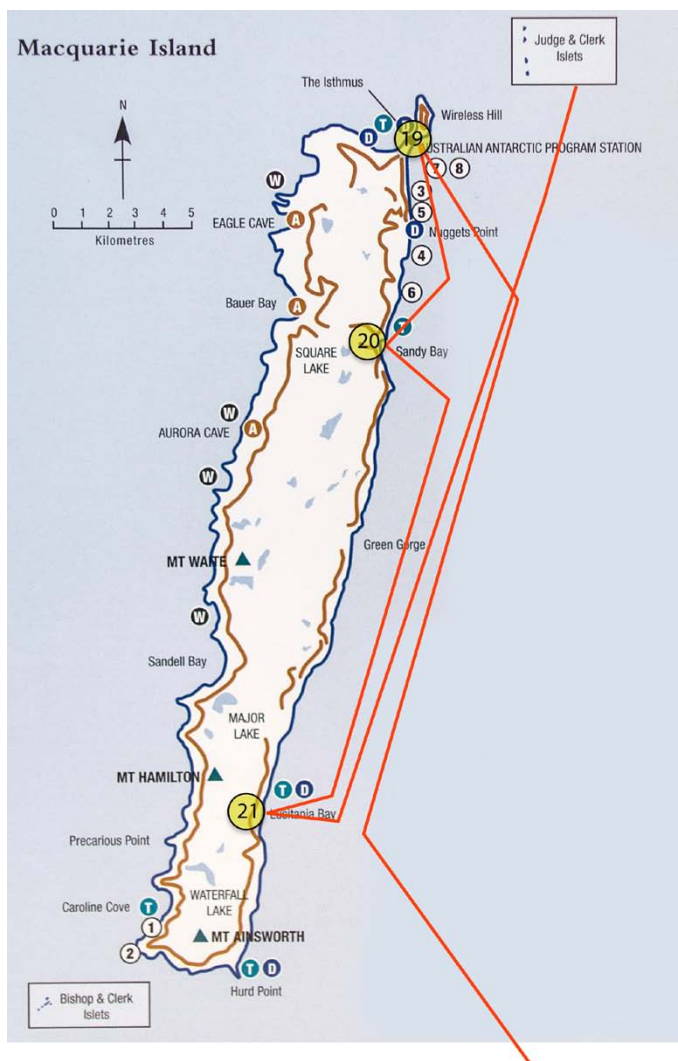


Antarctic Peninsula, Peter I Island



The Ross Sea

Macquarie Island





Lectures, presentations etc.:

17 January	Christian	Seabirds of the Drake Passage
17 January	Greg	Antarctica – an introduction
18 January	Elke	The marine food web in the Southern Ocean
18 January	Rolf, Greg	How to behave in Penguin country (the IAATO briefing) & how to use Zodiacs
18 January	Ben	An overview of Antarctic history
18 January	Ruedi	Albatross: master of the skies over open sea
19 January	Most of us	Recap: impressions, discussions, ...
20 January	Christian	Antarctic Penguins, part I
20 January	Film	Shackleton (feat. Kenneth Brannagh), part I
21 January	Ruedi	The Antarctic ecosystem
21 January	Helicopter team, Greg	Helicopter logistics
21 January	Ruedi	Whales – giants of the sea
21 January	Rolf	Glaciers (part I)
21 January	Film	Shackleton (feat. Kenneth Brannagh), part II
22 January	Ben	Early land-based exploration of Antarctica
22 January	Rolf	Peter I Island
23 January	Film, presented by Ruedi	Antarctica Challenge a global warming
24 January	Rolf	Glaciers (part II)
24 January	Film	Around Cape Horn: The voyage of the Peking

24 January	Ben	Cook versus Kerguelen
24 January	Greg	Recap & outlook
24 January	Ruedi	Life cycle of the Rockhopper penguins
25 January	Christian	Amundsen and Scott: the race to the South Pole
25 January	Film	The last place on Earth (Scott-Amundsen), part I
26 January	Ruedi	Pinnipeds
26 January	Film	The last place on Earth (Scott-Amundsen), part II
26 January	Ben	Antarctica: Giants and natives
26 January	Rolf	Photography (part I)
27 January	Elke	Let's talk about sh ... the physics of Penguin poo
27 January	Elke & every-body	The great Antarctic Quiz
27 January	Greg	Briefing
27 January	Rolf	(Almost) everything about geology
28 January	Christian	Scott and the Terra Nova Expedition
28 January	Film	The last place on Earth (Scott-Amundsen), part III
28 January	Rolf, Julian, Rob, Sjoerd	Become a navigator ... (or not)
28 January	Ruedi	Die Welt der Pinguine
28 January	Ruedi	World of the Penguins
28 January	Greg, Elke	Briefing & Recap
29 January	Ben	James Clark Ross
29 January	Rolf	Become a navigator ...
29 January	Rolf	Photography (part II)
29 January	Film	Worst journey in the world (I)
30 January	Film	The last place on Earth (Scott-Amundsen), part IV
30 January	Greg	Briefing
01 February	Ben	Dumont D'Urville
01 February	Film	The last place on Earth (Scott-Amundsen), part V
01 February	Elke	Invasive species
01 February	Rolf	Photography III (photo discussion)
01 February	Greg	Briefing
01 February	Film	Happy feet
02 February	Ben	Douglas Mawson
02 February	Film	The last place on Earth (Scott-Amundsen), part VI
03 February	Greg	Briefing on Ross Sea sites
03 February	Film	The last place on Earth (Scott-Amundsen), part VI (the book-keeping seems to be a bit confused here, but there was a part of this series on today)
07 February	Film	Encounters at the end of the world
07 February	Film	Begegnungen am Ende der Welt (same film as above, but German)
08 February	Rolf	Plate tectonics, part I
08 February	Ben	Mawson, part II

08 February	Ben	The great New Zealand Antarctic Heritage Trust fundraising auction
09 February	Rolf	Plate tectonics, part II
09 February	Ben	Mawson, part III
09 February	Christian	Antarctic Penguins, part II
10 February	Ben	Sealers and exploration
10 February	Ninette	Scurvy
10 February	Rolf	Photography, part III
10 February	Recap	Greg: Our position, progress, plans ... Chris: new seabirds species. Elke: Lakes in the Dry Valleys. Ruedi: Macquarie Island Wildlife and introduced species.
11 February	Elke	King Penguins
11 February	Ruedi	Albatrosses
11 February	Ben	Wireless Radio in Antarctica
12 February	Ben	Macquarie Island
12 February	Ben	Writers Festival. With contributions from Dale, Helena J., Rolf, Julian, Chris, Ben
12 February	Elke	The great Antarctic Quiz II
13 February	Greg	Sailing and climbing in the Ross Sea: A private expedition.
13 February	Rolf	Geology IV (How to build a mountain range and some Taylor Valley rocks)
13 February	Greg	Macquarie Island Briefing
15 February	Chris	Seabird conservation issues
15 February	Julian	Ushuaia film festival with mountaineering and extreme sports footage
16 February	Rolf	Spitsbergen
16 February	Elke, Ruede et al	Photo competition
16 February	Greg, Captain et al	Farewell!



SAVE THE ALBATROSS CAMPAIGN

Background

Every year thousands of albatrosses and other seabirds are being caught and drowned on baited hooks set by longlining fishing vessels around the world. The birds gather round the stern of fishing vessels as the lines are laid out, see the fish bait drop down on to the sea and grab it before the line has time to sink beneath the water, only to find a hook inside it which drags them down and drowns them. This 'by-catch' is not in the fishermen's interests, as they set the lines to catch fish such as tuna, squid and toothfish. Every seabird caught on the hooks is lost revenue for them. A single tuna longlining vessel can set a line over 80 miles long, on which there are 20,000 baited hooks. A single toothfish can sell for \$1,400. One southern bluefin tuna recently brought \$173,600 at a Tokyo fish market.

The campaign

The global campaign is being run by Birdlife International, an international partnership of bird conservation organizations. They are raising funds and lobbying for new laws. The funds will help to finance the campaign and to introduce mitigation measures on fishing boats, such as bird-scaring devices and adding more weights to the lines so that they sink more quickly out of sight of the birds. The new laws are to ensure that all countries with fishing fleets sign up to international agreements to take specific measures to reduce the seabird by-catch from longlining. A further initiative is to encourage the development of accreditation systems for fish sold, to ensure that it is 'albatross friendly' by being caught on lines which use recommended mitigation practices. This follows the success of 'dolphin friendly' tuna fishing practices in the 1980s and 1990s which led to the outlawing of drift nets, the so-called 'walls of death', which were killing thousands of dolphins, porpoises and birds.

The legislation

A new international treaty introduced in 2001, the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels (ACAP), under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), known as the Bonn Convention, has been signed by several countries already, but many, including the USA, South Africa, France, Russia, and Argentina, have yet to sign or to ratify the Agreement. This is a legally binding Agreement with an Action Plan which requires signatories to take specific measures to reduce the seabird by-catch from longlining. Additionally the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) has an International Plan of Action (IPOA) which encourages UN member countries to assess the seabird by-catch problem within their area of control, and to develop and implement their own National Plan of Action (NPOA) to tackle the problem.

What you can do

- (i) Make a donation to the campaign, using the attached form, and send this to the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) in England – see the accompanying letter.
- (ii) Write to your Member of Parliament (or equivalent) asking if your country has signed and ratified the ACAP and, if it is a member of UN, if it has implemented an NPOA.

Further information

This is available on the following websites:-

Birdlife International – www.birdlife.net American Bird Conservancy – www.abcbirds.org

RSPB – www.rspb.org.uk

The **South Georgia Habitat Restoration / Rat Erradication** Programme is very important to re-establish South Georgia's value as a seabird nesting site. It must be completed before the glaciers have retreated far enough to allow rats to cross these so-far impenetrable boundaries, so it is important to take action soonest! Please visit www.sght.org for more information.

This is also where you will find the Albatross narration "The Mists of Time" for sale.



Sponsor a Hectare of South Georgia

You can give a hectare (or more) of South Georgia back to its birds for only £90/\$140 per hectare

If you would like to be involved in protecting and conserving South Georgia, please complete the coupon below



I would like to sponsor _____ * Hectares (*insert number of hectares) at £90/\$140 each. Total value _____

Name _____

Name as you wish it to be on the certificate _____

Address _____

Country _____

Email address (please write clearly) _____

Credit Card number _____

Security number (the last 3 digits on the back of your card) _____ Expiry date _____ / _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please tell us where you obtained this form _____

Gift Aid: for UK donors only. Gift Aid means that for every £1 you give, we can claim an extra 28p from the Inland Revenue helping your donation go further.

☐ I would like the South Georgia Heritage Trust to reclaim tax through Gift Aid on this gift and any future gifts, until further notice. (NB: You must pay income tax or capital gains tax equal to the tax we reclaim, currently 22% .

☐ In the future we may wish to send you updates on this project and our other work on South Georgia. Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive these.

If you would like to receive these updates by email, please ensure your email address is included above (Sometimes we like to use email as it is quicker and cheaper leaving us with more money to spend on our conservation work).

Your details will not be made available to any other party.

PLEASE POST YOUR FORM AND PAYMENT TO

South Georgia Heritage Trust, Verdant Works, West Henderson Wynd, Dundee, DD1 5BT, Scotland., UK

Tel: +44 (0) 1382 229792 : Email: info@sght.org : Website: www.sght.org

Scottish Registered Charity Number: SC 036819